

HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE SUPERSTITION MOUNTAINS

Dick and Sharon Nelson



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INTRODUCTION

The Superstition Mountains are so close to the city of Phoenix and have been the subject of so much journalistic blather that many hikers may have given them a wide berth--and missed out on some of the finest desert hiking in the Southwest. We would never have recognized the Superstitions from some of the descriptions we've read. Adjectives such as "malevolent," "malignant" and "evil" might better describe the real estate developers and proponents of off-road-vehicle use than a range of desert mountains. The Superstitions are large, rugged, harsh, hot and wild. They are a maze of trails, a bag of tricks and contrasts, a delight and a challenge. Beneath the slick veneer of legends and newspaper articles about pistol-packing prospectors and lost gold mines lies the real treasure--more than 124,000 acres of wilderness.

In the western section of the mountains, Phoenix and its suburbs are close by. In places just outside the wilderness, water runs from the tap, fountains loft water into the air, and lawns are heavily irrigated; but here, only a fool would set out without carrying his own water. The Superstitions are not an urban playground. Water is present in the forms of springs and seeps, but these are usually far apart and unreliable. Yet these elusive water sources account for many of the contrasts which make the Superstitions so alluring. In a land of cactus and snakeweed, brilliant sun and dry washes, rounding a bend to discover some little pools of water beneath a cottonwood is one of the most pleasant experiences we can think of.

There are many miles of trails in the Superstitions--trails which pass by old mines, springs, cattle tanks, historical sites and Indian ruins; a trail that passes through an apple orchard and by a beautiful old ranch house; trails through cholla forests, pine forests and hackberry thickets; trails along hillsides covered with beargrass and shrub live oak; trails along dry desert washes in the western section; trails along streams filled with water cress and bordered by meadow rue in the eastern section; trails that are wide and easy to follow; routes that require painstaking patience to unravel; trails to please almost any type of hiker.

The place names are intriguing: Music Mountain and Music Spring, Palomino Mountain, Tortilla Pass, Coffee Flat, Roger's Trough and La Barge Canyon. Weaver's Needle (elevation 4,535) is one of the most famous landmarks in the Southwest--which is easy to understand when it bursts into view as you top out in Fremont Pass or when it towers above you in Needle Canyon. We've seen Weaver's Needle at almost every time of day and from almost every distance and angle. It dominates both the legends and the landscape, and it dominates one's memories of Peralta Canyon Trail, Dutchman's Trail, Needle Canyon Trail and many others. There are numerous other landmarks that you'll grow to recognize--Tortilla Mountain with its distinctive knob on top; the long, dun-colored cliffs of Bluff Spring Mountain; the massive bulks of Black Mountain and Battleship Mountain; the "needle's eye" in Miner's Needle. Elevations range from about 2,000 feet in the western end to an elevation of 6,265 feet atop Mound Mountain in the eastern end.

WILDERNESS

The Wilderness Act states that wilderness is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

The Superstitions are a unique, rugged wilderness area, but they are going to need more protection from the thoughtless and greedy if they are to remain so. Restrictions on use by domestic livestock will have to be set and enforced, limits set on the number of people who can use the area per day and the number of campsites which can be occupied at one time. Parts of the western end are heavily used by cattle, and the number of head grazed there must be reduced--hopefully in a manner equitable to the ranchers.

The Superstition Primitive Area was originally set aside by the Forest Service in 1939. It is now a part of the National Wilderness Preservation System and encompasses some 124,140 acres. There are many adjacent areas

that deserve inclusion in the Wilderness which we hope to see protected in the near future. The Superstitions will always be threatened by "progress." With luck, perhaps "progress" can be thwarted long enough for the next few generations to enjoy these mountains as we have.

No motorized vehicles or equipment are permitted in a wilderness area. Leave your radio and other city paraphernalia behind--the camper down the canyon won't appreciate your lugging in the very things he's trying to escape. Bring with you the minimum shelter and clothing you'll require, and don't modify the environment in any way.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

All of the trails described in this book were carefully hiked, measured, mapped and described by us in 1977. While every effort was made to maintain accuracy and to try to highlight those points of most significance to a hiker making the trip for the first time, this book should still be considered only an aid. You must depend on the physical trail (or route), the landmarks, careful planning and common sense to get you safely from place to place in an area as large and complex as the Superstitions. Always commit your backtrail to memory. If you lose the route, seriously consider turning around and going back the way you came rather than risk becoming hopelessly lost. Start out with short, easy hikes along parts of the longer trails. Study the landmarks as you go, and make special note of the trail junctions.

Just from the point of following trails or routes, hiking in the Superstitions can be a tricky proposition. There are many look-alike mountains, drainages and canyons; and your perspective may be changed considerably just by walking a few hundred yards. The more time you spend in the area, the more familiar and distinctive the major landmarks (and even the finer topography) will become.

Know where you are at all times, know where you are headed, etc. Always leave a note with a reliable individual. It should outline your expected itinerary--trailhead, route, and dead-line for return. Be sure to notify the holder of

your note when you do return.

You will not be able to depend on trail signs in the Superstitions. Vandalism will always be a problem in an area this close to a large city, and you should anticipate missing signs, incorrect mileages or the possibility that a sign you are looking at actually belongs along some other trail. Keep in mind that even some major trail junctions may not be marked at all. In fact, the most confusing part of many trails is the first hundred yards. We can think of several trails where the beginning is vague, but an excellent trail soon develops. Keep in mind that in areas where cattle are numerous, a rancher can create a whole new "trail system" just by moving a salt block. Cattle trails often intersect system trails, and it is sometimes difficult to determine which is which.

Wherever possible the trail designations, trailheads, etc., coincide with those established by the US Forest Service. In several cases we had to make modifications. Deciding from which direction to start a hike was easier in some cases than in others, but we HAD to start the hike at one end or the other!

In a number of instances in this book, we have made an extra effort to describe stretches of trails which we considered "vague" or "tricky." Some of these areas may have been improved by trail crews by the time you make the hike--so much the better for you. Of course, we couldn't minutely describe every vague spot on every trail, and you may have some difficulty in areas where we had none. The trails are in a constant state of change, depending on weather, cattle, maintenance and use.

The trails in this book include some sections which are only routes where no actual trail is present. In washes such as those in Roger's Canyon and Boulder Canyon, there are often no trails or only trails of use that go from one side to the other (or along both sides at once). It requires a little more effort to hike over the boulders and sand in the washes, but the main routes are at least obvious.

It is virtually impossible to hike a single trail in the Superstitions without coming to at least a few obscure spots--a split in the trail where none is shown on the map, an obscure wash crossing, etc. Patience will usually get you

through such areas if you know that the trail continues ahead and you are certain of your location. If you are short on patience, you should hike elsewhere, or you risk blundering ahead into trouble. If you're reasonably persistent, you'll probably enjoy the challenge of the extensive, somewhat capricious network of trails in the Superstitions.

We have made no effort to rate the hikes in this book as "easy," "moderate" or "difficult." All involve hiking in rugged country over trails and routes of varying grades and quality. Expect climbs and descents on all hikes. Pace yourself, and don't try to tackle too much at one time.

Always hike with at least one other person. If you come to a vague stretch of trail, one hiker can remain on the trail while the other searches for the route ahead. Use whistles and a pre-arranged signal for communication, and stay within communicating range. If the trail is discovered ahead, the rear hiker can be signalled to move up. If not, you can easily return to the spot where you were still on good trail and retrace your steps to the trailhead.

How far you can hike in the Superstitions in a single day depends on your physical condition, the weight of your pack, your water supply, the quality and steepness of the trail, the weather and unforeseen developments. If you're just in for the day, be sure to allow a little longer for the return trip so there's no danger of being overtaken by darkness. Don't be so intent on reaching a particular destination that you put yourself under the same pressure as you would experience trying to beat the five-o'clock traffic in downtown Phoenix. Our own feeling is that a ten-mile hike in the Superstitions in one day is a good, solid hike. Most people overestimate the speed at which they can hike and the distance they can cover--and if you attempt to cover more than about ten miles per day, you're going to miss a lot.

Looking back, it is the small things we remember about many of the hikes. It may take you a while to unwind, but try for a quality experience, for observations and memories that will last. We stored up a lot of memories while putting this book together--the grandfather of all gopher snakes, newly shed with massive gold

and brown coils; an elf owl--four inches of huffy fluff that was violently opposed to our camping near his saguaro; the day the box of windproof matches ignited in Dick's pants pocket; coyotes and owls calling at night; the contented gibberish of quail and cactus wrens in the early mornings.

There are all types and lengths of hikes described in this book. The trail network, while not always logical, is extensive. Many of the trails were originally used by cowboys and prospectors and don't necessarily follow routes which would have been developed for hikers. The passes are usually approached by the most direct and strenuous route. We do not believe there is any need for expansion of the trail system; there are enough miles of trail to take you into almost any popular or secluded part of the range. Theoretically, all of the trails inter-connect with each other, except for the Hieroglyphics Trail and the *Massacre Grounds Route.

If you have only a few hours to spare, consider just heading in for a short distance on one of the major trails out of First Water or Peralta trailheads. For long day hikes, plan to be back well before dark. The rugged individual who wants to spend a week backpacking won't be disappointed in the Superstitions. We made one backpack which covered 72 miles and a number of others which covered more than 30 miles. (We can't recommend the warmer months for long trips, however.)

The best way to tackle some of the longer hikes is to plan a big loop trip or to have someone drop you off at one trailhead and pick you up at another. Car shuttles work well if everyone is clear on the entire plan. One party parks at one trailhead, a second group parks at a different trailhead, and each will have use of the others' vehicles to drive back into town or to some previously arranged rendezvous. Both parties should have keys to the other vehicles before the start of the hike so that there won't be any problems if the two groups fail to make contact along the trail.

Be warned that some trailheads, especially Upper Horrell Place and Roger's Trough, may be difficult to get into. We suggest a four-wheel-drive vehicle for Roger's Trough, and four-wheel

drive may be necessary to get into some of the other trailheads as well. Most of the trailheads are inaccessible for at least short periods after a big rain; and some of the roads may not be passable for even longer periods. Most of these roads are subject to flashflooding, so keep these possibilities in mind when planning your trip.

MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Maps are an important part of this book, but remember that they are only aids. Maps cannot substitute for common sense when following a trail or route or for being prepared for the unexpected. All trails were carefully mapped by us when we researched this book, but trails and routes are subject to change.

Included in this book are several different types of maps. These are a) line drawings showing the roads or parts of the roads into each trailhead; b) a line drawing showing all the trails and routes described in this book and how they inter-connect; and c) detailed sections of United States Geological Survey maps with the trails, mileages, etc., on them.

A) Under the section "Trailhead Descriptions and Maps" are maps and descriptions of the routes into each of the various trailheads. These are self-explanatory for the most part. These maps are not drawn to scale. Keep in mind that many of the trails can be reached via more than one trailhead, although some of these trailheads may provide a more roundabout access than others.

B) On pages 46 and 47 is a line drawing showing all the trails described in this book and their relationship to each other. The junctions look easier to identify on the map than they may prove to be in the field. Many of the junctions are not marked or may be vague. This often applies to some stretches of the trails themselves where--for varying distances--there may be no apparent trail whatsoever.

C) USGS topographic maps are tremendously detailed. An experienced map reader can easily learn a great deal about an area on one of these maps without actually going out into the field. Some of these maps were made a number of years ago, however, and some of the man-made features they depict may no longer be

accurate. The most recent topographic maps reproduced in this book were made in 1966 and the oldest in 1948. While the topography is generally very accurate (occasionally a stream bottom has altered its course slightly from that on the map), we have found it necessary to re-align the dashes of trails in places and make a few changes in such things as trailheads.

Topographic maps are originally printed in five colors--brown for contour lines, green for thickets and forests, blue for water, black for place names and red for miscellaneous items. These are all reproduced as shades of gray or black in this book. The blue may not show at all; nonetheless, we think the black and white maps are very helpful. A good map reader should have no difficulty in recognizing hills, washes, canyon bottoms, ridges, trails, roads, etc., from the maps. We have found that the green on the topo maps for the western part of the Superstitions is somewhat deceiving. Possibly an area must have trees at least the size of sugar sumacs to be represented in green. A small leaflet which explains the various symbols, colors, etc., is available from the USGS and some of the outlets which handle topo maps. We recommend that you pick up a copy.

While we were making the hikes and describing the trails and routes in this book, we also checked the general accuracy of the trail alignments on these maps. In some places it is easy to check the alignment because there are plenty of landmarks, or the area is relatively open, etc. In other places, such as in a forest, it is not easy to check the exact alignment of a trail without resorting to more technical methods which were not at our disposal. Our corrections and checking of the trails were done only while hiking. In a number of cases where a trail (or trails of use) continuously switched from one side of a wash to the other, we simply drew the dashed line right up the middle of the wash to indicate the general route. If we had attempted to show every little wash crossing and bit of trail in some of these cases, the map would have become very confusing. When hiking in a wash, remember that there might be trails of use on either side or perhaps none at all.

All trail alignments on the maps should be considered approximate. Trails change--mainte-

nance crews may re-align whole sections; shortcuts may develop into main trails; parts of trails may wash out after floods or be obliterated by cattle or obscured by brush or trails of use, etc., etc. The trail system in the Superstitions is possibly one of the more difficult ones to learn. In places (such as parts of La Barge and Boulder Canyons) there may be no trail whatsoever, yet we show a dashed line to indicate the general route. After careful consideration, we decided that any attempt to differentiate between good and poor sections of trails on the maps would only lead to confusion.

When we are researching a hiking guide and mapping a particular trail, we prefer to use a "prediction" method, which is often very helpful but by no means foolproof. We study the map carefully, looking especially at contour lines and for important landmarks, then "predict" what the trail will do in the next hundred yards or quarter mile. For example, we may "predict" that the trail will pass by a side canyon or a trail junction. Usually the trail does as we predicted; occasionally it doesn't. When it doesn't, we sit down and carefully study the situation to determine why the map and terrain don't match. In using the "prediction" method, be sure not to **make** the map fit the terrain or vice versa. Many side washes, cliffs and hills look alike on the maps--and in the field. Occasionally we have thought we were in a particular location depicted on the map, only to find--upon more careful study--that we were in another location that was very similar in terrain. For example, the map may show a small hill to the north of the trail. Be sure that this is the hill you are actually looking at and not a similar hill located elsewhere. Topographic maps are excellent aids but require careful study and a lot of experience if they are to be used to best advantage.

When hiking in the rugged Superstitions, always know where you are, both in the field and on the map. Keep track of where you have been by carefully studying the map and making note of various landmarks behind you. You may unexpectedly have to return by the same route. If this is due to some sort of an emergency, you do not want to spend time looking for the route. Mark and identify on the map those features you find important.

Once you become very familiar with the Superstitions you can play an interesting game with others who have been over the various trails. Lay out a topographic map (the ones in the book are fine) and point to a particular spot or section along a trail. The other person must then describe the area, types of vegetation, terrain, etc., to the point where there is no question that he or she remembers the area. The object is to be able to do this for any section of all the trails described.

Trail junctions, while obvious on the maps, are often difficult to discern in the field. For one thing, signs are often missing, and we have even found a few that were pointed in the wrong direction. Experienced hikers in the Superstitions become accustomed to looking for trails, junctions and routes. We have found that once a particular trail has been hiked it is usually easy to follow the next time. Even experienced hikers can expect to lose parts of a trail from time to time. However, if you find that you can't remember the main features of a trail recently hiked, maybe you should do your hiking in a less complex area than the Superstitions.

In general, we have made few changes in the USGS topographic maps reproduced in this book. We have drawn in the US Forest Service system trails with dashes; the non-system (non-maintained) routes are indicated by a series of dots. We have realigned sections of the trails and routes where we found that they were incorrect on the topos. We have also added the recognized USFS names for each of the trails. (Because of methods used to reproduce these maps, the old trails and names still show, but they are now gray rather than black.) We have added letters along the trails--such as "A," "B," etc. In our texts describing the individual trails, these letters are prefixed by the trail number. Examples of this would be "104-K" and "241-C" and "238-A." These letters on the maps refer to the various features and points described in the text. In addition to the trail number and letter for certain features, we have included the mileage (calculated from the start of each trail) for each feature. Therefore, in our descriptions of the Dutchman's Trail 104, the letter "K" on the map reads "104-K; 4.1" in the text. The "104" is the official Forest Service number for

Dutchman's Trail; "K" refers to a specific point along the trail; and "4.1" is the distance that point "K" is from the start of the trail.

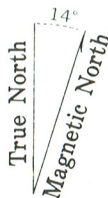
Besides letters for important points along each trail, we have also included each whole mile on the map (1.0, 2.0, etc.). These mileages were wheeled by us using a measuring wheel and were measured from the start of each trail or route as described in this book.

The following diagram shows the names of those USGS topographic maps which cover the Superstition Mountains. At least some sections of those marked by an asterisk are included in this book because parts of trails or routes are covered by them. A set of these seven maps (Goldfield, Haunted Canyon, Iron Mountain, Mormon Flat Dam, Pinyon Mountain, Two Bar Mountain and Weaver's Needle) can be useful in the field. We recommend that you acquire a set for use in conjunction with hikes and trails described in this book. The other maps may be useful from time to time as an aid in reaching trailheads, etc.

* MORMON FLAT DAM 1964	* HORSE MESA DAM 1964	* PINYON MTN 1964	* TWO BAR MTN 1964
* GOLDFIELD 1966	* WEAVERS NEEDLE 1966	* IRON MTN 1966	* HAUNTED CANYON 1966

Since all of our trails and routes are overlaid on these topo maps, it is important that you be thoroughly familiar with USGS maps. All of the maps in this book have been reproduced at the same size as the actual USGS maps, and the following information applies to all of them:

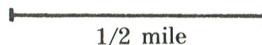
a) The magnetic declination is:



Approximate mean declination

b) The scale is:

1:24000



c) All are reproduced in a north-south alignment.

d) The contour interval is the elevation change between two adjacent brown lines. This interval is 20 feet on the Goldfield map and 40 feet on the other maps.

A brief word about the various descriptions may be in order. We have made no attempt to describe every facet of every trail, but we tried to describe those features which we found of most importance or interest. Occasionally we describe a difficult spot in some detail. Keep in mind that there may be many other "difficult" spots where we had no difficulty or which we simply didn't feel warranted a detailed description. If ten people hiked a particular trail in the Superstitions and wrote it up, there would undoubtedly be ten different descriptions. Some would put emphasis on one area, some on another. The condition of each trail on the day we made the hike had to be the basis for our descriptions. A month or two later, the conditions of these trails might have changed somewhat and resulted in a somewhat different description or emphasis.

The Superstitions are rugged, complex and extensive. Distances to help in emergencies are great, and there are places along some trails where people seldom happen by. The Superstitions certainly are not for everybody. We recommend them only for experienced hikers familiar with the hot desert and qualified in map reading, survival skills, etc.

PRECAUTIONS FOR HIKERS

We have never had any problems in the Superstitions other than one time when we had difficulty kindling a fire during a rainstorm--and even then it was not a matter of life or death. While there is always the possibility of some unforeseen problem, most trouble can be avoided

by careful preparation, planning and caution. The following list, while not complete, covers many of the basic precautions you should take.

1. Stay on established trails or routes. If you lose a trail, don't hesitate to turn around and return to the trailhead--you can fortify yourself with information from the ranger district or a veteran hiker and tackle the route another day. Many of the fatal accidents that have occurred in the Superstitions were the result of hikers leaving trails, taking shortcuts or climbing cliffs. (The rock on many of the mountains is unstable and not suitable for climbing.)

2. Unless you're planning a very long trip, carry all the water you anticipate using. If you must rely on one or more supplemental sources of water, ascertain that they are active and potable **before** you set out. There are a number of springs marked on the topo maps, but they may be seasonal or badly polluted--or they may have been bone dry for years. In our book, **DESERT SURVIVAL**, we go into considerable detail concerning water--how much you'll need, how to carry it, where to find it if you're fortunate. Even on a cool day in the Superstitions, one gallon of water per person per day should be considered an absolute minimum. There were many days when we drank more than two gallons apiece and could have used more if it had been available. All water should be treated with water purification tablets.

3. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. In hot weather, avoid exposing your skin to the sun. Wear a long-sleeved shirt, a wide-brimmed hat and denim pants (not cutoffs). Carry extra clothing in your pack in case the weather should change suddenly.

4. Be alert. There are at least four species of rattlesnakes occurring in the Superstitions; and if you do much hiking at all, you will eventually see one. Don't carry a handgun for the purpose of murdering snakes--just walk around them. They are preoccupied with their own affairs which do not include the ambush or pursuit of hikers. (If that were the case, we can think of at least two authors who would be writing cookbooks instead of hiking guides.) Be careful not to threaten; snakes are fearful of being stepped upon, reached for, shot at or sat upon--and if retreat seems to be cut off, they will

resort to their only other defense. Most snakebites occur when someone is careless or attempts to capture or handle a snake. There are some Arizona coral snakes in the Superstitions, but they are not a threat if you don't handle them. There are also a few Gila monsters in the Superstitions. These plump, brightly beaded, lethargic lizards are of great interest and are not dangerous unless closely approached or handled--at which time they can become surprisingly animated. One of these, alarmed by our approach down a dry wash, forgot to look behind when he backed up, fell off his rock and lay hissing and chomping in the sand for a few moments before righting himself and scuttling for cover. We found him more amusing than frightening--but from a distance.

5. Always carry matches in a waterproof container and a flashlight with spare bulb and batteries. Be prepared to spend the night out even if you only plan a day hike.

6. Plan your trips carefully during the summer monsoon season. Don't camp in washes or other areas subject to flashflooding. Avoid being prominent or sheltering near prominent objects during electrical storms.

7. Never hike alone. Even a minor injury such as a sprained ankle could be serious if it occurred when you were hiking in an isolated area such as along Roger's Canyon Trail. Without anyone to go for help, it could be days or weeks before another human would wander into such an obscure spot.

8. Take an American Red Cross first-aid course, and carry a complete first-aid kit. Because parts of the Superstitions are a hot, desert environment, be familiar with the first aid for heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Better yet, know how to prevent them in the first place. Always carry salt, and be sure your body is getting enough water and salt in hot weather.

9. Watch out for cacti. Both jumping cholla and teddy bear cholla are common in many areas of the Superstitions. A deeply imbedded stem can be a serious problem and may require pliers for complete removal. A lightly imbedded stem can be flipped off by using a pocket comb.

10. There are some patches of poison ivy along some of the eastern trails such as the

Roger's Canyon Trail. Learn to recognize it, then simply walk around it.

11. The bark scorpion, the black widow spider and other species of biting or stinging arthropods are fairly common in the wilderness. Don't pick up a rock or a stick without checking the underside. Make sure clothing and shoes are uninhabited before putting them on. There are several species of small flies which can make travel miserable, especially during spring. Have head and neck protection and a long-sleeved shirt. Be sure to carry some effective insect repellent to protect exposed skin. Use an insect-proof tent.

12. Carefully study the section in this book titled "Maps and Descriptions."

HOUSEKEEPING

The Superstitions are large enough to accommodate fair numbers of people without showing heavy impact if hikers and horseback riders keep to the maintained trails. The areas around the major springs (Charlebois, La Barge, Whiskey, etc.) don't fare so well. During good hiking weather, these small thickets of sumacs, sycamores or cottonwoods are a seething mass of humanity. CB radios and portable music blare, babies squall, dogs bark, the perimeters are picked clean of anything that will burn, and smoke hangs among the trees. While most people are as considerate and careful as possible, the sheer numbers have to include a slob or two--so visit the springs if you must, but camp elsewhere. You'll not only get more sleep but do less damage.

If you're leading a group, try to camp in an area where the impact will be most limited. Be sure each member adheres closely to the basic rules, keeping in mind that one or several of them may never have hiked or camped in their lives before.

The following rules come as naturally as breathing to most of us, but in case you're new to hiking and camping, remember: A) Carry and use a litter bag; B) Bury all feces; C) Don't dig trenches around tents; D) If you must have a fire, keep it small and use only downed wood (green wood usually does not burn well anyway); E) Whenever possible, carry foods

which don't require cooking--crackers, cookies, candies, cheese, jerky, salami, cereal, nuts, fruit ; F) Don't camp within a quarter mile of springs or water tanks; G) Leave pets at home.

SEASONS

Be sensible when planning a trip into the Superstitions. Temperatures in the western section can be expected to soar above 100°F in the shade almost every day from late spring into early fall. In our opinions this weather is too hot for safe, enjoyable hiking, even if you are carrying plenty of water, etc. If you do decide to hike during hot weather, keep it short and plan on being back before noon. There are always a few individuals who will attempt a five-day backpack into the desert in July--it takes all kinds to make headlines. Winter temperatures in the western end are usually in the 60's during the day but will often drop below freezing at night.

Summer temperatures in the higher eastern elevations are usually going to be cooler than those in the western end, but expect the days to be hot, and plan to carry whatever water you will need. Winter temperatures in the eastern part of the range will usually be cool. Nights will often be below freezing so that tents, down jackets and down sleeping bags are advisable. Plan a winter hike into this area the same as you would any other outing into a cold-weather area.

The Superstitions do not get a lot of rain or snow--about 12 inches annually in the western mountains and about 24 inches annually in the eastern mountains. Light winter rains can be expected in both areas, with a greater likelihood in the east. Summer monsoon rains usually occur in July and August, sometimes in June and September. Flashfloods can be expected during the monsoon season, and trips should be planned accordingly. Access to many of the trailheads may be impossible for periods ranging from a few hours to several days or more. Never camp in a wash; it may be dry one minute and under six feet of howling water the next. In fact, runoff from other locations can cause flashflooding far downstream where there may have been no rainfall at all. Anticipate

heavy rains, especially in late afternoons during the summer months. We plan to start at the crack of dawn during monsoon season in order to be back early in the afternoon.

Lightning is a potential threat, particularly during the monsoon season. Avoid prominence when selecting a campsite, and keep as much distance as possible between yourself and prominent objects such as trees and exposed ridges. Remember that a direct hit is not necessary for a lightning strike to be fatal; the charge has a tendency to spread out on the surface and to travel in all directions.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment required for hiking and backpacking has been described in some detail in two of our other books, **50 HIKES IN ARIZONA** and **DESERT SURVIVAL**. We especially recommend that you refer to the latter for detailed lists. Make a checklist of your own which covers all the equipment you might ever require, including food and water. There is nothing more frustrating than finding yourself ten miles beyond the trailhead and missing some important piece of gear. (Avoid the opposite mistake of carrying too much and weighing yourself down with non-essentials.) We consider the following items to be just the very basics:

Dayhike equipment: Daypack; canteens; salty foods and salt tablets; complete first-aid kit; comb; emergency food; practical clothing which includes a wide-brimmed hat, bandana, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, sturdy boots, jacket (down-filled if the weather is liable to turn cold) and gloves; flashlights with extra bulbs and batteries; matches in waterproof container; guides and maps; toilet items; litter bag; and complete emergency kit which contains everything from razor blades and a knife to safety pins.

Backpack equipment: Backpack; all the equipment listed above with the probable exception of the daypack; tent with sewn-in floor and rainfly, tent stakes and poles; sleeping bag (down-filled for cold-weather trips); ground mat; small stove and fuel. Many other items could be included--you will have to determine your own needs.

LEGENDS

The Superstition Mountains lend themselves to legends. The name seems to have its origin in the culture of the Pima Indians, a peaceful tribe that lived along the Gila River. The warlike Apache Indians hunted and hid in the mountains so that the Pimas dared not enter. To offset the natural lure of the mountains, a number of superstitions evolved which made them off limits to those Pimas who might otherwise have fallen prey to the Apaches--thence the name, Superstition Mountains. As it was, few men--white or Indian--cared to meet the Apaches in a landscape so conducive to Apache ambushes and concealment. And few men felt the Superstitions contained any wealth large enough to offset the risk of bringing it out.

In the period around 1860, there began to be some talk of rich gold ore situated somewhere within the Superstitions. One persistent story was that of the Peralta Mine, supposedly belonging for several generations to an old Mexican family by that name. It was said that they seldom worked the mine because the Apaches made it too risky an operation; however, Mexican peons and pack trains were supposed to have gone into the mine on two or more occasions.

A number of white men were supposed to have known of the mine's location, even to have worked it. There seem to have been numerous maps floating around, but they had a habit of becoming lost or misplaced when interested parties tried to get down to facts. Men who claimed to have found the mine were subsequently unable to return to it for the purpose of filing a claim--or some disaster befell them before they could file, or they had important business to attend to first and never got around to filing. To us, it seemed highly unlikely that not one individual among them was strongly motivated enough to pinpoint the mine's location, prove the existence of gold and file a claim--unless all their stories were hoaxes to begin with.

Among those who claimed to have worked the mine were Jacob Weiser and Jacob Waltz--German immigrants and partners. It was alleged that Weiser died from a wound received

while trying to outrun a band of Apaches. Waltz, apparently devastated by the death of his lifetime friend and partner, removed to humble quarters in Phoenix where (20 years later) he was said to have described the mine's location to a woman and her foster son who cared for him prior to his death. Neither they nor thousands of hopefuls who have searched over the years were able to locate "The Lost Dutchman Mine."

Weaver's Needle is the center of most of the mine lore, and the landscape around it is peppered with claim markers. However, the geology of the Superstitions would indicate that they are very poorly mineralized. There are some mineral deposits near the western end in the vicinity of Goldfield and to the east near the towns of Superior, Miami and Globe-but no bonanzas such as those described in the legends.

So...the legends are interesting and certainly contribute to the aura of the Superstitions, but we could find no factual information on which to base anything but good stories to tell around camp.

ANIMALS

There are numerous species of animals found within the Superstitions. Some are found only in the western desert section; others are limited to the cooler eastern section. Still other species range throughout the Superstitions. The following lists of amphibians and reptiles, birds, mammals and other animals include the common species you are likely to see plus many of the more rare but interesting species.

Amphibians and reptiles: Certain species of lizards are very common along some trails. Snakes are less common, although the hiker who spends much time in the Superstitions will eventually see a rattlesnake. Simply give it a wide berth.

Frogs and toads:

- Canyon Tree Frog
- Colorado River Toad
- Couch's Spadefoot Toad
- Great Plains Toad
- Leopard Frog
- Red-spotted Toad
- Western Spadefoot Toad

Woodhouse's Toad

Tortoises and turtles:

- Desert Tortoise
- Sonora Mud Turtle

Lizards:

- Arizona Alligator Lizard
- Arizona Night Lizard
- Banded Gecko
- Chihuahua Whiptail
- Chuckwalla
- Collared Lizard
- Desert Spiny Lizard
- Eastern Fence Lizard
- Gila Monster
- Great Plains Skink
- Greater Earless Lizard
- Leopard Lizard
- Lesser Earless Lizard
- Regal-horned Lizard
- Short-horned Lizard
- Side-blotched Lizard
- Sonora Spiny Lizard
- Tree Lizard
- Western Whiptail
- Zebra-tailed Lizard

Snakes:

- Arizona Coral Snake
- Black-necked Garter Snake
- Black-tailed Rattlesnake
- Checkered Garter Snake
- Coachwhip
- Common Kingsnake
- Glossy Snake
- Gopher Snake
- Long-nosed Snake
- Mohave Rattlesnake
- Night Snake
- Saddled Leaf-nosed Snake
- Sonora Lyre Snake
- Sonora Mountain Kingsnake
- Sonora Whipsnake
- Western Black-headed Snake
- Western Diamondback Rattlesnake
- Western Ground Snake
- Western Patch-nosed Snake
- Western Rattlesnake

Birds: A surprising number of birds are attracted to the many different habitats contained in the Superstitions. If you do much hiking in these rugged ranges, you'll probably find yourself growing fond of some of the "old regulars" like the canyon wren, cactus wren, curve-billed thrasher and Gambel's quail. Their distinctive calls are a familiar sound along many desert trails. Hawks hunt over the high places, and kinglets tinker in the hackberry thickets.

The following is a list of those species of birds which have been reported in the area. Some are rare and not likely to be seen, so we have marked with an asterisk those species which we have most often encountered on our hikes.

- Blackbird, Brewer's
- Blackbird, Red-winged
- *Bluebird, Mountain
- Bluebird, Western
- Bunting, Indigo
- Bunting, Lazuli
- *Cardinal
- Chickadee, Mountain
- Cowbird, Bronzed
- *Cowbird, Brown-headed
- Creeper, Brown
- Dove, Ground
- *Dove, Mourning
- *Dove, White-winged
- Eagle, Bald
- Eagle, Golden
- Falcon, Prairie
- Finch, Cassin's
- *Finch, House
- *Flicker, Common
- *Flycatcher, Ash-throated
- Flycatcher, Dusky
- Flycatcher, Gray
- Flycatcher, Hammond's
- Flycatcher, Olive-sided
- *Flycatcher, Wied's Crested
- Flycatcher, Western
- *Gnatcatcher, Black-tailed
- Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray
- Goldfinch, Common
- Goldfinch, Lawrence's
- Goldfinch, Lesser
- *Grosbeak, Black-headed

- Grosbeak, Evening
- *Hawk, Cooper's
- Hawk, Ferruginous
- Hawk, Marsh
- *Hawk, Red-tailed
- Hawk, Sharp-shinned
- *Hummingbird, Black-chinned
- Hummingbird, Broad-tailed
- *Hummingbird, Costa's
- *Jay, Pinyon
- *Jay, Scrub
- Jay, Steller's
- Junco, Gray-headed
- Junco, Oregon
- *Kestrel, American
- *Kingbird, Cassin's
- *Kingbird, Western
- *Kinglet, Ruby-crowned
- Martin, Purple
- *Meadowlark, Western
- *Mockingbird
- *Nighthawk, Lesser
- Oriole, Northern
- *Oriole, Hooded
- *Oriole, Scott's
- *Owl, Elf
- *Owl, Great Horned
- *Owl, Screech
- Peewee, Western Wood
- *Phainopepla
- *Phoebe, Black
- *Phoebe, Say's
- *Pigeon, Band-tailed
- *Poorwill
- *Quail, Gambel's
- *Raven, Common
- Redstart, Painted
- *Roadrunner
- *Robin
- *Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied
- *Shrike, Loggerhead
- Siskin, Pine
- Solitaire, Townsend's
- *Sparrow, Black-throated
- Sparrow, Chipping
- Sparrow, House
- *Sparrow, Lark
- Sparrow, Lincoln's
- Sparrow, Rufous-crowned
- Sparrow, Song

- *Sparrow, White-crowned
- *Starling
 - Swallow, Bank
 - Swallow, Cliff
- *Swallow, Violet-green
- *Swift, White-throated
- *Tanager, Summer
- *Tanager, Western
 - Thrasher, Crissal
- *Thrasher, Curve-billed
 - Thrasher, Sage
- *Thrush, Hermit
 - Titmouse, Bridled
 - Titmouse, Plain
- *Towhee, Brown
 - Towhee, Green-tailed
- *Towhee, Rufous-sided
- *Verdin
 - Vireo, Bell's
 - Vireo, Hutton's
- *Vireo, Solitary
 - Vireo, Warbling
- *Vulture, Turkey
- *Warbler, Yellow-rumped
 - Warbler, Black-throated Gray
- *Warbler, Lucy's
 - Warbler, MacGillivray's
 - Warbler, Nashville
 - Warbler, Orange-crowned
 - Warbler, Red-faced
 - Warbler, Townsend's
 - Warbler, Virginia
- *Warbler, Wilson's
 - Warbler, Yellow
- Waxwing, Bohemian
- Waxwing, Cedar
- *Woodpecker, Acorn
- *Woodpecker, Gila
- *Woodpecker, Ladderback
 - Wren, Bewick's
- *Wren, Cactus
- *Wren, Canyon
 - Wren, House
- *Wren, Rock

Mammals: Most species of mammals found in the Superstitions are nocturnal. Many of the larger animals are disappearing as a result of poaching and wanton shooting. The following list represents most of the mammals found in

the area.

- Badger
- Bailey's Pocketmouse
- Black-tailed Jackrabbit
- Bobcat
- Brush Mouse
- Cactus Mouse
- Cliff Chipmunk
- Collared Peccary
- Coyote
- Deer Mouse
- Desert Cottontail
- Desert Shrew
- Gray Fox
- Harris Ground Squirrel
- Hispid Cotton Rat
- Hognose Skunk
- House Mouse
- Kit Fox
- Merriam's Kangaroo Rat
- Mountain Lion
- Mule Deer
- Ord Kangaroo Rat
- Pallid Bat*
- Raccoon
- Ringtail
- Rock Pocketmouse
- Rock Squirrel
- Southern Grasshopper Mouse
- Spotted Skunk
- Striped Skunk
- Valley Pocket Gopher
- Western Harvest Mouse
- Western Pipistrelle*
- White-tailed Deer
- White-throated Woodrat

*In addition to these two, there are a number of other species of bats which have been reported for the area.

Other animals: A wide variety of invertebrates-including insects, spiders, scorpions and even snails--can be found in the Superstitions. Some of the more common and interesting species are listed here.

- Ant Lion
- Arizona Recluse Spider

Bark Scorpion
 Black Widow Spider
 Carpenter Bee
 Cholla Beetle
 Cicada
 Dung Beetle
 Giant Desert Centipede
 Giant Mesquite Bug
 Giant Millipede
 Jerusalem Cricket
 Mesquite Girdler
 Palo Verde Root Borer
 Pinacate Beetle
 Potter Wasp
 Praying Mantis
 Prionus Beetle
 Robber Fly
 Solpugid
 Stripe-tailed Scorpion
 Tarantula
 Tarantula Hawk
 Velvet Ant
 Vinegaroon
 Walking Stick

PLANTS

Hundreds of species of interesting plants are found in the Superstitions. Essentially, those found in the hot, dry western section are desert species. Semi-desert shrubs and grasses are found in the higher areas of the western and middle sections. In the eastern end, the lower hills are usually covered with chaparral—a type of dense growth consisting largely of shrubs. Ponderosa pines grow in some places in the eastern section where there are cooler canyons and slopes. Riparian vegetation is predominant along washes, with seepwillow and desert broom growing in the washes themselves and trees such as Arizona sycamore, Arizona walnut and Fremont cottonwood in the moister areas.

Wildflowers abound. The display is better some years than others and depends upon rainfall during the current and previous years, temperatures, etc. Sometimes there will be acres and acres of desert solidly quilted with wildflowers. The month of May is usually the best time to see wildflowers in the Superstitions, but there is almost always something

blooming or going to seed (and even the seeds have curious adaptations and designs). One spring the filaree (a very tiny plant with purple flowers) was so thick that the soles and sides of our boots were stained purple. A good wildflower guide can add to the enjoyment of most hikes in the Superstitions.

A wide variety of grasses grow in these mountains. In fact, the current list of 62 different species could easily be expanded if an intensive study were undertaken.

In our description of each hike, we have tried to mention the common trees, shrubs and cacti along the route. We have done this to help you visualize the type of country through which the trail passes. You soon learn to associate specific types of vegetation with certain conditions—for example, sycamores and cottonwoods are usually found along washes.

The following list is by no means complete. It includes some of the more common trees, shrubs and cacti.

Common trees:

Alligator Juniper
 Arizona Cypress
 Arizona Sycamore
 Arizona Walnut
 Arizona White Oak
 Canotia
 Desertwillow
 Emory Oak
 Foothill Paloverde
 Fremont Cottonwood
 Gambel Oak
 Goodding Willow
 Honey Mesquite
 Ironwood
 Netleaf Hackberry
 One-seed Juniper
 Ponderosa Pine
 Single-leaf Pinyon
 Sugar Sumac
 Utah Juniper
 Velvet Ash

Common shrubs and other perennial plants:

Agave ("century plant")
 Arizona Rosewood
 Catclaw Acacia

Creosotebush
Desert Broom
Desert Hackberry
Jojoba
Manzanita
Mountain Mahogany
Ocotillo
Palmer Oak
Seepwillow
Shrub Live Oak
Spineless Hopsage
Yucca (several species)

Common cacti:

Buckhorn Cholla
Claret-cup Hedgehog
Desert Christmas Cholla
Engelmann's Hedgehog
Engelmann's Prickly Pear
Fishhook Barrel Cactus
Fishhook Pincushion
Jumping Cholla
Saguaro
Sprawling Prickly Pear
Teddy Bear Cholla

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Superstition Mountains and Superstition Wilderness are administered by Tonto National Forest. There are many areas of private land surrounding the wilderness, and--in several cases--it is necessary to cross this land to reach trailheads. Please be sure to respect private property: camp elsewhere; don't litter; close all gates. Should you require additional information on the Superstitions, contact:

Forest Supervisor
Tonto National Forest
Post Office Box 13705
Phoenix, Arizona 85034

Three different ranger districts of Tonto National Forest are responsible for the administration of different sections of the Superstition Wilderness. Specific information is usually available from them.

District Ranger
Mesa Ranger Station
26 North McDonald
Mesa, Arizona 85201

District Ranger
Tonto Basin Ranger Station
Post Office Box 647
Roosevelt, Arizona 85545

District Ranger
Globe Ranger District
1100 North Broad Street
Globe, Arizona 85501

There have been numerous books published on the Superstitions. So many of these deal with some aspect of treasure hunting that factual information is hard to extract. While a few make interesting reading up to a point, we got the impression that the authors of some of these books may never have set foot in the Superstitions or that the books were based on a one-day horseback trip into the area around Weaver's Needle.

The Superstitions are inhabited by a wide variety of animals and plants. With Arizona hikers in mind, we have written a series of outdoor books. All of the following are our titles, published by Tecolote Press, Inc., Glenwood, New Mexico. They are available at better book and outdoor stores.

DESERT SURVIVAL

50 HIKES IN ARIZONA

EASY FIELD GUIDE TO COMMON...

...DESERT CACTUS OF ARIZONA
...DESERT BIRDS OF ARIZONA
...DESERT INSECTS OF ARIZONA
...DESERT MAMMALS OF ARIZONA
...SNAKES OF ARIZONA
...TREES OF ARIZONA

A map of the entire Tonto National Forest is available, for a fee, from the Forest Supervisor or the district ranger offices. It is useful for following roads but is of little help with hiking trails.



Wilderness boundary sign



Sycamore



Indian hieroglyphics



Barrel cacti

TRAILHEAD DESCRIPTIONS AND MAPS

Trailheads are places accessible by motor vehicle from which trails described in this book start, end or can be reached. Nine different trailheads are described and were used by us in researching this book. The two most popular trailheads are Peralta and First Water.

Access to all trailheads involves travel over unpaved sections of road, and several roads may require a four-wheel-drive vehicle. Both Peralta and First Water trailheads normally can be reached by passenger cars except under unusual circumstances such as after heavy rains. Roger's Trough is one of the roads that probably should not be attempted without a four-wheel-drive vehicle. Roads into many of the trailheads cross washes which may be flooded after rains. Occasionally even a rain some distance away from the wash may result in flooding downstream.

If you plan on starting at one trailhead and having someone pick you up at another (or if you plan a car shuttle), be sure that both roads and trailheads are accessible. While it may still be feasible to hike out on a road if someone were

unable to get in to pick you up, some of these hikes out could be real treks, especially in hot weather.

Be sure that all vehicles are in excellent condition and that the cooling systems are well maintained. Being towed out of some of these areas could be very expensive. We suggest that you drive into both trailheads before attempting a hike involving two trailheads, and be sure to make contingency plans in case things don't go as scheduled.

Our directions for reaching the various trailheads were accurate at the time we did our research, but--like the trails--the roads around the perimeter of the Superstitions are subject to change. Local inquiry may be necessary in some cases. Allow extra time for reaching trailheads, and plan ahead.

The trailheads described are listed in alphabetical order. Some of the names of the trailheads have been designated by us for lack of official names. Keep in mind that the odometer mileages listed may vary somewhat from one vehicle to the next. Even new tires versus old will result in some fluctuation in the various mileages recorded on your odometer. Therefore, all mileages should be considered approximate.

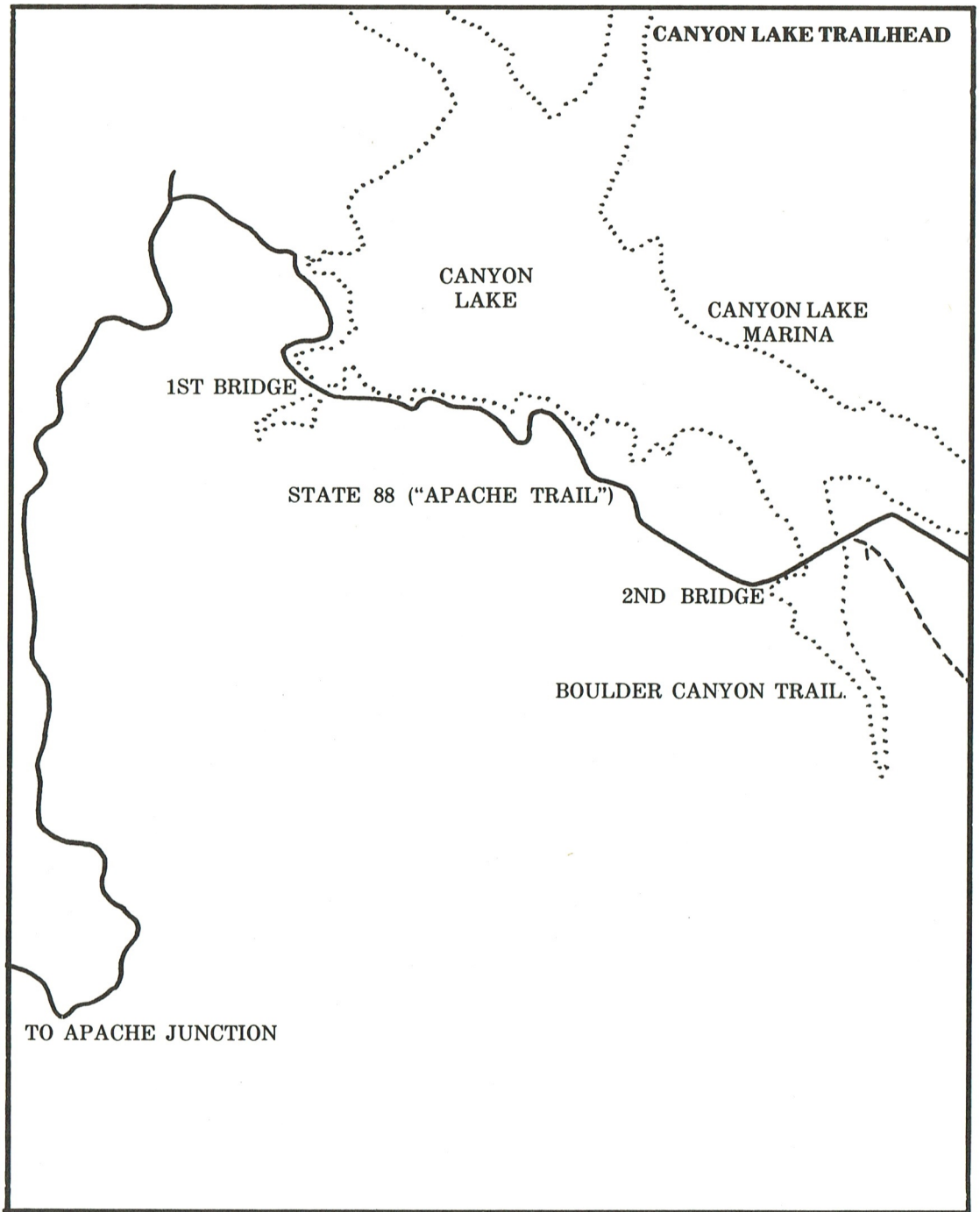
SUPERSTITION TRAILHEADS

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CANYON LAKE TRAILHEAD

Canyon Lake Trailhead--named for its proximity to the lake of that name--is reached by taking State 88 ("Apache Trail") northeast from Apache Junction where State 88 junctions with US 60, 80, 89 (0.0). Proceed through Goldfield and past First Water Road, and continue to Canyon Lake. The highway crosses two bridges over arms of Canyon Lake. Canyon Lake Trailhead (15.4 miles) is located on the south side of the highway, just east of the second bridge. This point is just across the highway from Canyon Lake Marina.

Boulder Canyon Trail 103 has recently been modified at its starting point and may not be signed. We have not field checked these changes, and they are not described in the text or shown on the map.



FIRST WATER TRAILHEAD

This is a very popular starting point for many hikers entering the Superstitions. The trailhead is reached by taking State 88 ("Apache Trail") northeast from Apache Junction, starting at a junction with US 60, 80, 89. The highway passes through Goldfield and, at 5.4 miles, First Water Road (FS 78) is on the right (0.0). This dirt road heads in a northeasterly direction and may be unsigned.

First Water Road continues northeast to a parking area at road's end (2.6 miles). This is the **new** First Water Trailhead. From here, an old road continues 0.4 mile beyond the barrier to the **old** First Water Trailhead. Because the new trailhead was established after we had finished our field research for this book, we have started Dutchman's Trail 104 at the old trailhead rather than the new.

FIRST WATER TRAILHEAD

**STATE 88 ("APACHE
TRAIL")**

**FIRST WATER ROAD
FS 78**

PARKING

HIEROGLYPHICS TRAILHEAD

The Hieroglyphics Trailhead is reached by taking US 60, 80, 89 southeast from Apache Junction, starting at the junction with State 88. Continue on US 60, 80, 89 for about 6.8 miles to Kings Ranch Road (0.0) which is between mileposts 201 and 202. Turn left/northeast on King's Ranch Road and proceed 2.2 miles to the end of the pavement. (This point is about 0.1 mile beyond the high point of Dinosaur Mountain which is off to the left.) The last time we were in here, the road was dirt from this point on in.

Continue on the dirt road to a four-way intersection (2.8 miles), and turn right/east onto King's Way. At 3.3 miles this road turns left/north and proceeds to Hieroglyphics Trailhead at road's end (3.6 miles). This area is private property. Please act accordingly so that hikers will have continued access. Hieroglyphics Trail 101 starts as a path on the other side of the fence.

HIEROGLYPHICS TRAILHEAD

**HIEROGLYPHICS
TRAIL**

KING'S WAY

**KING'S RANCH
ROAD**

US 60, 80, 89

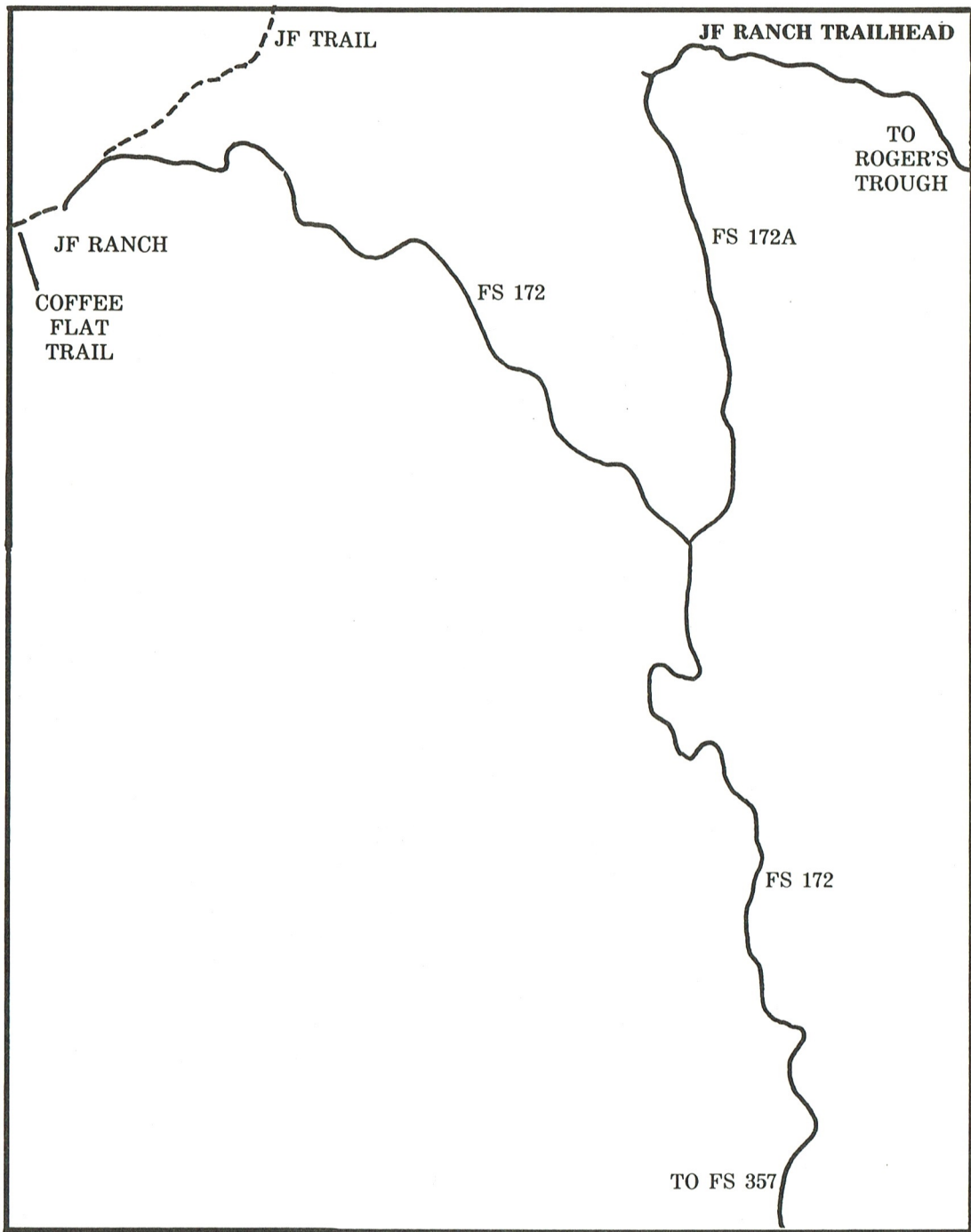
JF RANCH TRAILHEAD

The first part of the drive into JF Ranch Trailhead is the same as the route into Roger's Trough Trailhead. From Apache Junction, head southeast on US 60, 80, 89 to Florence Junction. Then proceed east on US 60 for 2.0 miles and turn left/north on Whitlow Dam Road. Proceed on this paved road for an additional 1.8 miles, then bear right onto FS 357 which is a dirt road. Proceed 3.4 miles on FS 357, then turn left onto FS 172. (This same point can be reached by taking US 60 for 3.2 miles west from Superior, then turning right/north onto FS 357 and proceeding 4.6 miles on FS 357 to FS 172.)

Proceed north on FS 172, passing Roblas Butte, which is a prominent landmark, and following Hewitt Wash upstream for part of the way. Keep in mind that certain stretches of this road are impassable after heavy rains and that the sand is treacherous when not packed down.

About 8.6 miles north of the turnoff from FS 357 onto FS 172, there is a road fork. The right fork is FS 172A which goes to Roger's Trough Trailhead. Take the left fork (FS 172), and continue for 1.9 miles to where the road crosses Fraser Wash. This point is JF Ranch Trailhead, and JF Trail 106 starts here. The trail heads up the wash but is not obvious because it is only a route at this point.

A short distance further in on the road there is a small corral and the entrance gate to JF Ranch. This point by the corral is the end of Coffee Flat Trail 108 as described in this book. Hikers going in on JF Trail should avoid parking in Fraser Wash, and those parking near the JF Ranch entrance should respect the private property and not park in such a way as to interfere with ranch activities.



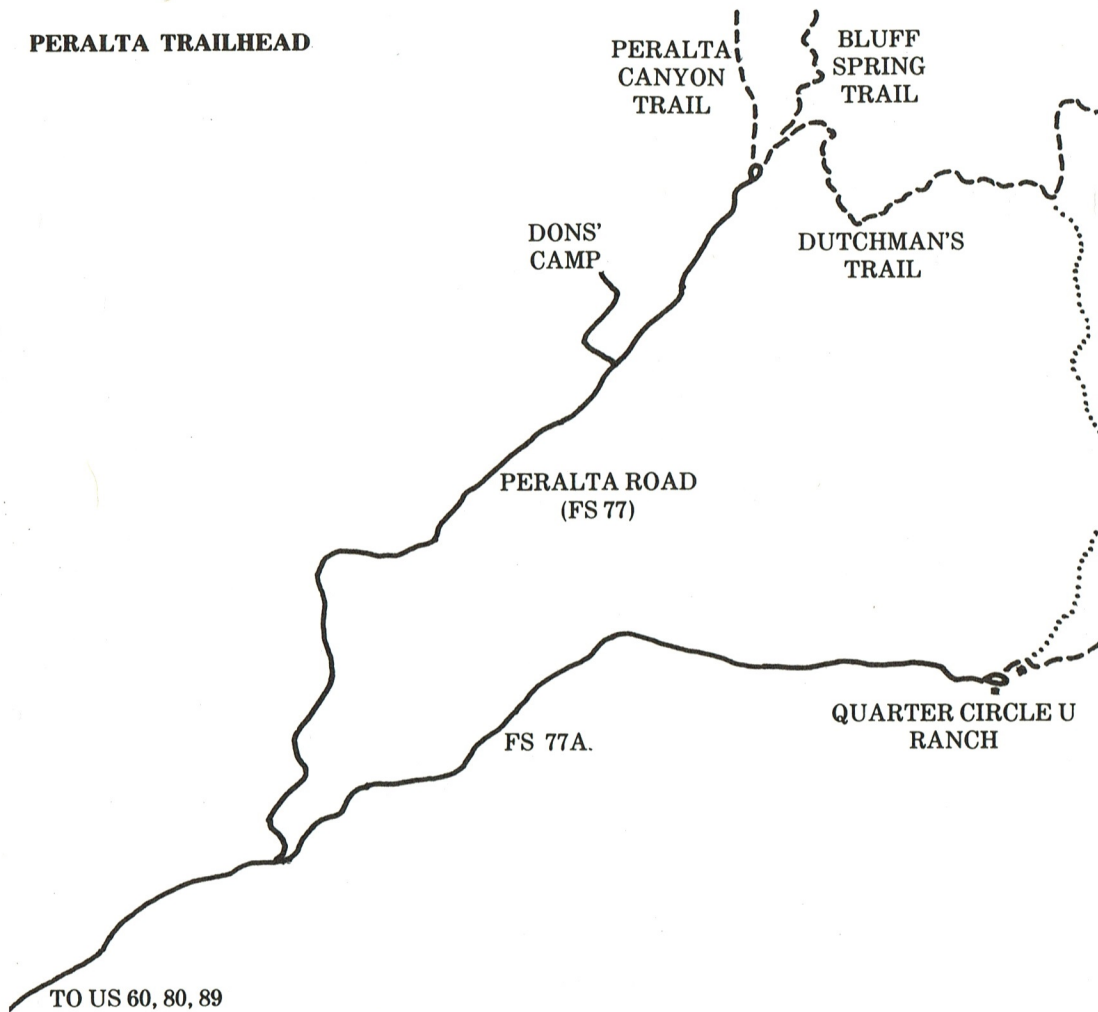
PERALTA TRAILHEAD
[including Quarter Circle U Ranch Trailhead]

The Peralta Trailhead is probably the most popular point of access to the Superstitions. It is reached by taking US 60, 80, 89 southeast from Apache Junction (starting at the junction with State 88) for about 8.3 miles to Peralta Road (FS 77). This turnoff is between mileposts 204 and 205.

Take Peralta Road (0.0) northeast to a road fork (5.5 miles). FS 77A goes to the right here for 1.6 miles to Quarter Circle U Ranch Trailhead. This is private property, and access is at the owners' discretion. Horses have been available for rent here and may still be. Coffee Flat Trail 108 starts here.

From the fork at the 5.5 mile point, Peralta Trailhead is reached by taking FS 77 which is the left fork. At 6.9 miles (1.4 miles beyond the fork), a side road goes left to Dons' Camp. Continue ahead on the main road to the parking area and Peralta Trailhead at 7.4 miles. Several trails start or end at or near the Peralta Trailhead. Included are such trails as Dutchman's, Peralta Canyon and Bluff Spring.

PERALTA TRAILHEAD

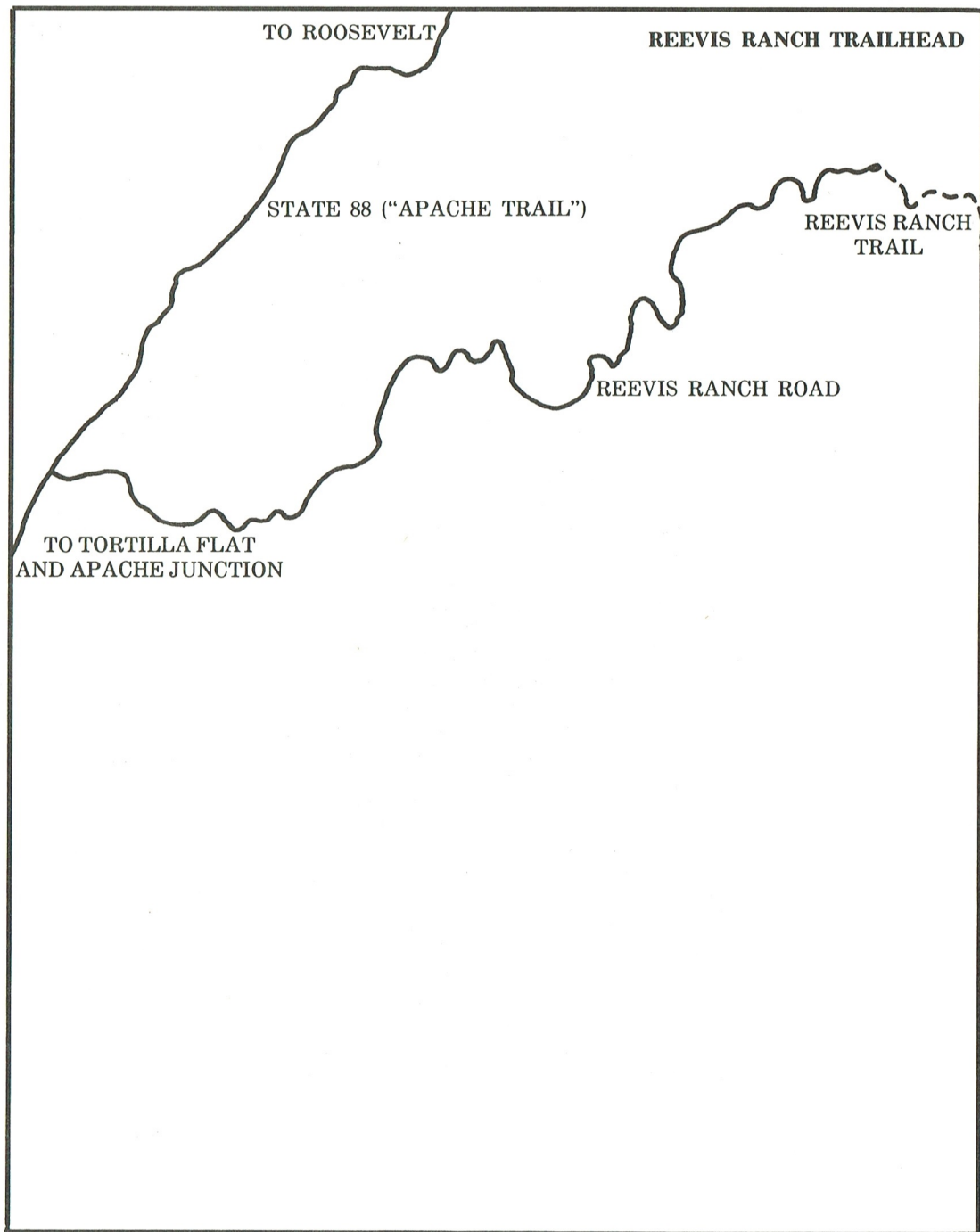


REEVIS RANCH TRAILHEAD

Reevis Ranch Trailhead can be reached either from Apache Junction or from the town of Roosevelt. The following description is based on Apache Junction as a starting point.

From the junction with US 60, 80, 89 in Apache Junction, take State 88 ("Apache Trail") northeast. Proceed through Goldfield, past the First Water Road, Canyon Lake and Tortilla Flat. As the highway continues east, it becomes a dirt road and heads down Fish Creek Hill. It passes a state highway maintenance yard, then a short distance beyond the yard passes a road going to the right to IV Ranch. The turnoff to Reevis Ranch Road (FS 212) is between mileposts 227 and 228. It is about 0.9 mile east of the maintenance yard and about 31.6 miles from Apache Junction.

Turn right/east onto Reevis Ranch Road (0.0), and proceed up the winding road through a pretty area dominated by chaparral. The road ends at a barricade (3.0). This is Reevis Ranch Trailhead, and Reevis Ranch Trail 109 starts on the opposite side of the barricade.



ROGER'S TROUGH TRAILHEAD

The first section of the drive into Roger's Trough is the same as that into JF Ranch. From Apache Junction, head southeast on US 60, 80, 89 to Florence Junction. Then proceed east on US 60 for 2.0 miles, and turn left/north on Whitlow Dam Road. Proceed on this paved road for an additional 1.8 miles, then bear right onto FS 357 which is a dirt road. Proceed 3.4 miles on FS 357, then turn left onto FS 172. (This same point can be reached by taking US 60 for 3.2 miles west from the town of Superior, then turning right/north onto FS 357 and proceeding 4.6 miles on FS 357 to FS 172.)

Proceed north on FS 172, passing Roblas Butte, which is a prominent landmark, and following Hewitt Wash upstream for part of the way. Keep in mind that certain stretches of this road are impassable after heavy rains and that the sand is treacherous when not packed down.

At about 8.6 miles north of the turnoff from FS 357 onto FS 172, there is a road fork. FS 172 goes left to JF Ranch Trailhead; take FS 172A to the right to Roger's Trough Trailhead. Parts of the road into Roger's Trough from this fork are very steep, and a four-wheel-drive vehicle should be considered a necessity.

From the junction of FS 172 and FS 172A, take FS 172A (the right fork) toward Roger's Trough. In another 1.8 miles, there is a saddle where a road goes left. Continue on the main road which goes to the right here, and proceed another 1.8 miles to another road fork. Turn left here and proceed carefully for another 0.3 mile to the parking area at road's end. This is the Roger's Trough Trailhead. The trail heading north from here is Reeves Ranch Trail 109.

ROGER'S TROUGH TRAILHEAD

REEVIS RANCH
TRAIL

TO JF RANCH

FS 172A

FS 172

FS 172

TO FS 357

TORTILLA TRAILHEAD

To reach Tortilla Trailhead, take State 88 ("Apache Trail") northeast from Apache Junction. The road passes Goldfield, Canyon Lake and Tortilla Flat. It continues as a graded road after the pavement ends at a little over 24 miles. From the end of the pavement, continue 0.9 mile to an unsigned road going off to the right/south. This is Tortilla Ranch Road (0.0). This turnoff is between highway mileposts 221 and 222--and if you come to Fish Creek Hill, you have come too far.

Tortilla Ranch Road may be very rough, especially along some rocky areas near the beginning. Most passenger vehicles would probably have difficulty negotiating it, and four-wheel drive is recommended. Continue in on the road to a corral complex (being careful to re-close all gates). There is a cabin on the right and a metal building on the left in this area (2.6 miles). From the area of the buildings, continue on the main road which swings to the left somewhat.

At 3.2 miles, a short road goes off to the right for 0.1 mile to the windmill at Tortilla Well. Tortilla Trailhead, however, is reached by continuing ahead at the 3.2-mile point. At the 3.4-mile point, take the road which goes to the right and passes through a gate. The road ends at 3.9 miles, and this is Tortilla Trailhead. JF Trail 106 is still an old road at this point and ends on the other side of the fence as described in this book. *Hoolie Bacon Trail 111 starts at a junction a short distance up JF Trail.

STATE 88 ("APACHE TRAIL")

TORTILLA TRAILHEAD

TORTILLA
RANCH
ROAD

TORTILLA
HEADQUARTERS

*PETERS
TRAIL

JF
TRAIL

UPPER HORRELL PLACE TRAILHEAD

This trailhead is reached by taking State 88 northwest from a junction with US 60-70 between the towns of Superior and Globe. Proceed on State 88 for about 21.5 miles to FS 449, and turn south onto FS 449 (0.0). (The turnoff is just a short distance west of School House Point Road which is on the north side of the highway.)

Proceed south on FS 449 which is a dirt road. Saguaros, chollas and other typical desert vegetation grow in this area. The road crosses some private land, passing near a ranch house at 2.7 miles. Take the left fork at this point, and be sure to re-close all gates. The road now follows Campaign Creek and is difficult (or impossible) to traverse after rains because of the deep sand. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is strongly recommended. At 3.3 miles, a road goes to the right to Tule Canyon, but continue on the main road here rather than go right. At about 5.1 miles, the road swings left and leaves the wash bottom. At 6.3 miles it rejoins the wash. The road crosses the wash several times as it continues. At 7.4 miles there is a fork. Keep right at the fork, and continue to a corral 0.1 mile further. Drive through the corral and gate, and select a parking spot off the road. The trailhead is reached by hiking in on the road to the ranch house--Upper Horrell Place (7.8 miles). This point is about 0.3 mile beyond the corral. The road ends at Upper Horrell Place Trailhead which is just beyond a tin shed. Reevis Gap Trail 117 starts here. NOTE: Upper Horrell Place is private property. Please do not camp in the area, and keep things clean and quiet.

UPPER HORRELL PLACE TRAILHEAD

TO STATE 88

CAMPAIGN CREEK
(APPROX.)

CORRAL..

UPPER HORRELL PLACE
(PRIVATE)

REEVIS GAP TRAIL

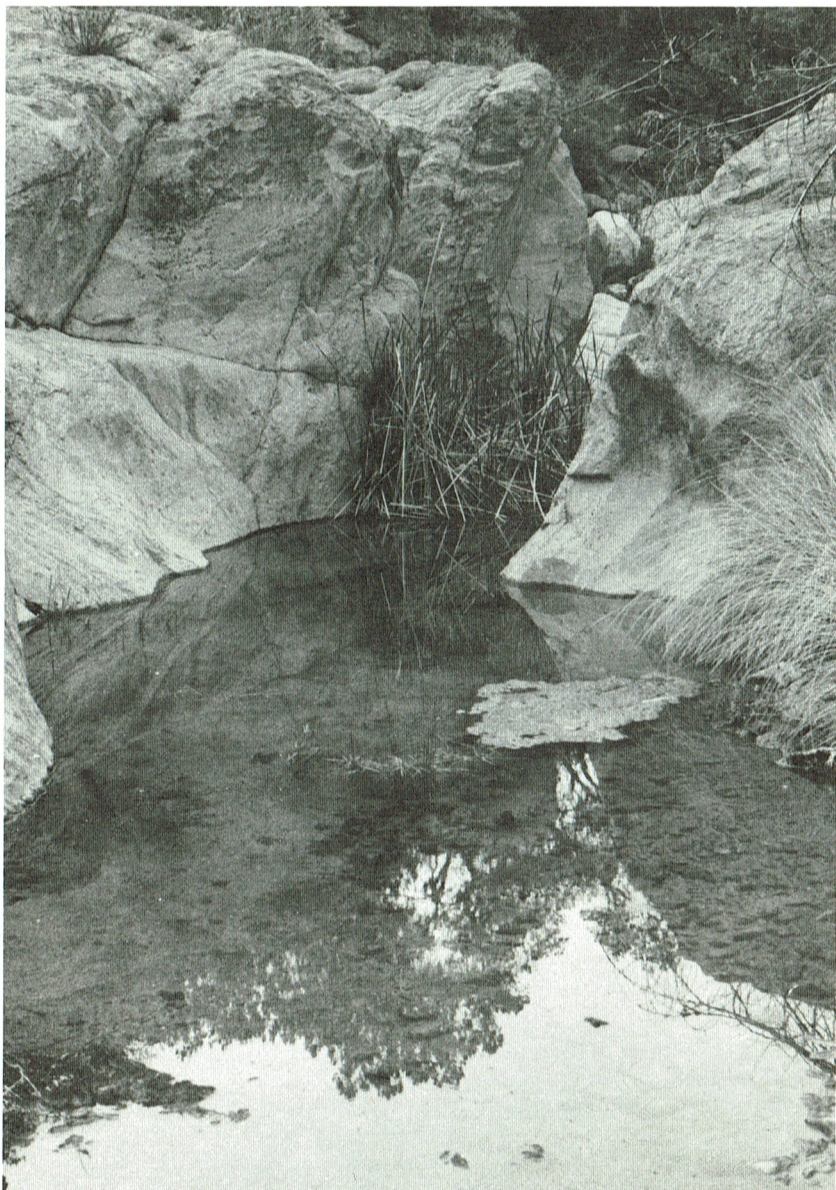
*KRN TRAIL



Gila Monster



Scenic vista



Verdant pool



Cliff dwellings



A Superstition pass

TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS AND MAPS

We originally planned to describe in this book all of the trails in the Superstition Wilderness, and--with that in mind--we hiked them all. By the time we finished researching all of the trails, many of them were undergoing changes due to maintenance activities. So we have limited our descriptions to those trails we consider to be the most interesting and popular. There are a number of places in the text and on the maps where we mention trails which are **not**

described in this book. Those trails which are marked in the text or on the maps by an asterisk [*] are not described in this edition of our book, nor should their alignments on the maps be considered detailed--they are shown only to indicate their relationships to the trails we are actually describing.

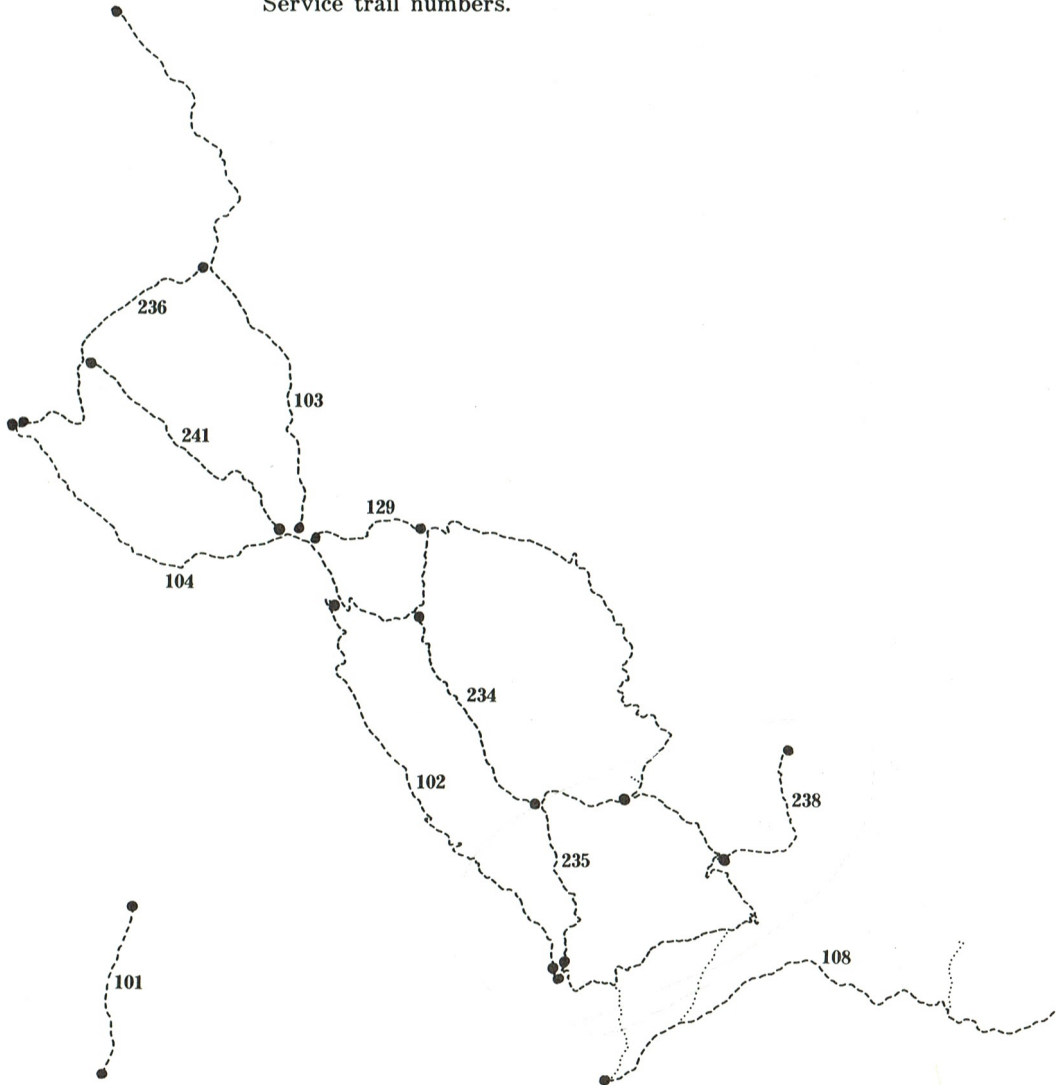
Below is a list of the trails described in this book. On pages 46 and 47 is a map showing the general layout of the trails in relation to each other, followed by descriptions and maps of the individual trails.

LIST OF DESCRIBED TRAILS

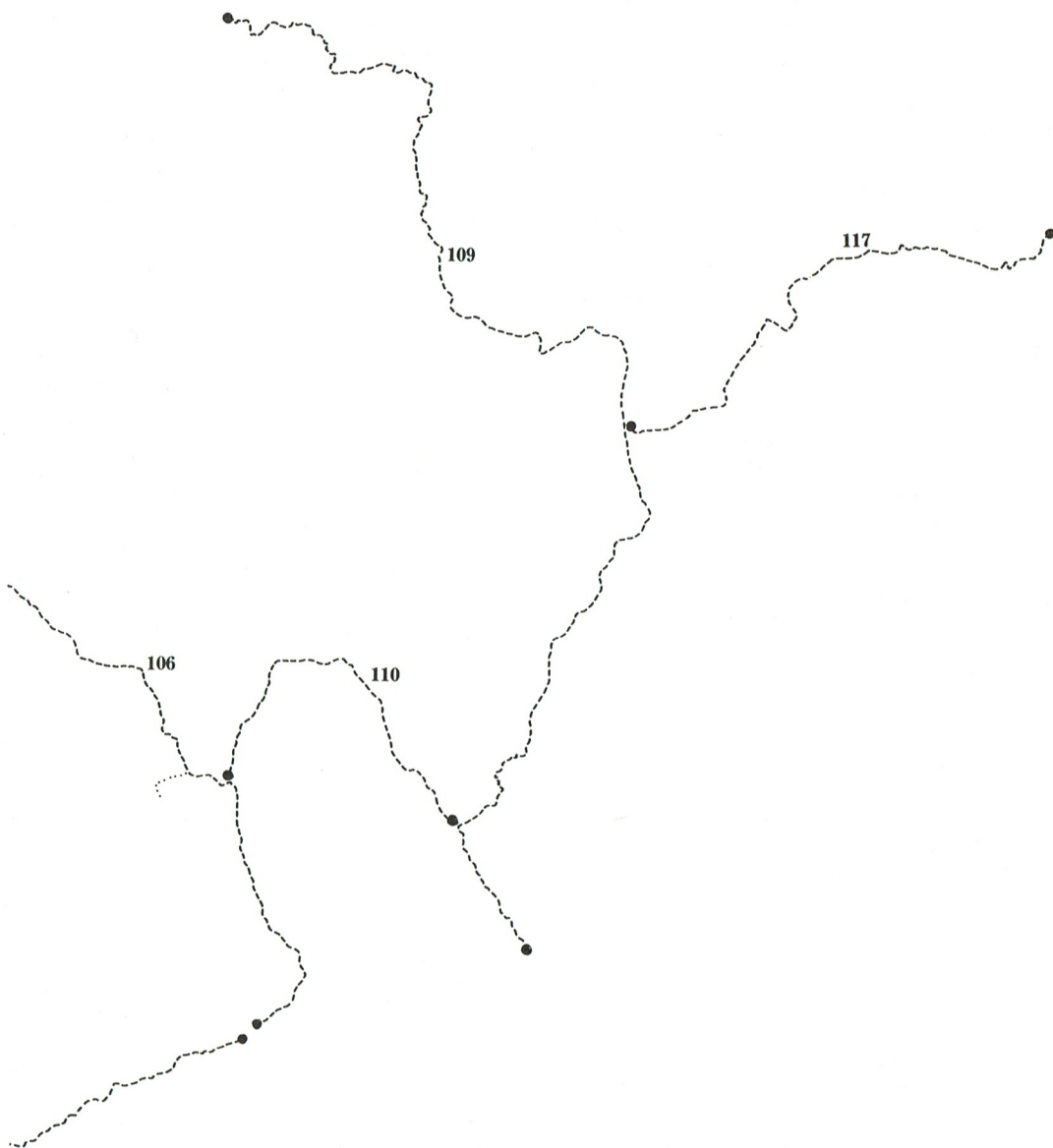
BLACK MESA TRAIL 241.....	page 48
BLUFF SPRING TRAIL 235.....	page 51
BOULDER CANYON TRAIL 103.....	page 53
BULL PASS TRAIL 129.....	page 57
COFFEE FLAT TRAIL 108.....	page 59
DUTCHMAN'S TRAIL 104.....	page 65
HIEROGLYPHICS TRAIL 101.....	page 72
JF TRAIL 106.....	page 74
NEEDLE CANYON TRAIL 234.....	page 79
PERALTA CANYON TRAIL 102.....	page 81
REEVIS GAP TRAIL 117.....	page 85
REEVIS RANCH TRAIL 109.....	page 90
ROGER'S CANYON TRAIL 110.....	page 97
SECOND WATER TRAIL 236.....	page 101
WHISKEY SPRING TRAIL 238.....	page 103

SUPERSTITION TRAILS SHOWN IN THIS BOOK

Only trails described in this book are shown on this map. Other trails and routes are not shown. The start and end of each trail is indicated by a dot. Numbers refer to Forest Service trail numbers.



**SUPERSTITION TRAILS
SHOWN IN THIS BOOK**



BLACK MESA TRAIL 241

Summary: This trail starts in Garden Valley at a junction with Second Water Trail, then climbs up to Black Mesa. It then drops into Boulder Canyon and ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail in the Boulder Basin area. Total length of the trail, one way, is 3.0 miles.

The beginning of this trail is reached from First Water Trailhead. From there an old road continues on the other side of the barrier at the wilderness boundary. This road drops down and heads east to an old road fork at 0.3 mile. From here the right fork continues about 100 yards to the old parking area. From here Dutchman's Trail 104 proceeds southeasterly for about 50 yards to a junction with the start of Second Water Trail 236. Black Mesa Trail starts from Second Water Trail at a junction 1.5 miles northeast of the junction with Dutchman's Trail. For additional information, see our description of Second Water Trail.

The start of Black Mesa Trail [241-A; 0.0] is at a junction situated next to a low knob in Garden Valley. It is usually a fairly obvious trail unless cattle have obscured it at the beginning. Engelmann's prickly pear, jumping cholla, foothill paloverde, turpentine bush, triangle-leaf bur sage, buckhorn cholla, snakeweed and a lot of small mesquites are among the plants growing on the valley floor.

From the junction at 241-A, the trail climbs gradually in a southeasterly direction toward the edge of Black Mesa. Soon after the start of the hike, the top of Weaver's Needle becomes visible in the distance, and Superstition Mountain can be seen to the far right. There are a few large clumps of desert Christmas cholla along the trail. (It has thin stems, long spines and colorful red fruit.) A casual glance indicates that saguaros obviously prefer the rocky hillsides of Black Mesa to the flat terrain of Garden Valley.

The trail climbs along the side of Black Mesa and gradually leaves Garden Valley. There is a narrow cliff of black basalt along the side of the mesa, and teddy bear cholla more or less replace the jumping cholla that grew in the valley. There are numerous saguaros, and jojobas are common shrubs here.

There is a canyon to the right of the trail,

and ocotillos and agaves grow on the hillsides. The trail continues to climb steadily. There are some nice panoramic views back toward Garden Valley and off to the right. An occasional covey of Gambel's quail may scatter at the approach of a hiker, and cardinals can often be heard in the area.

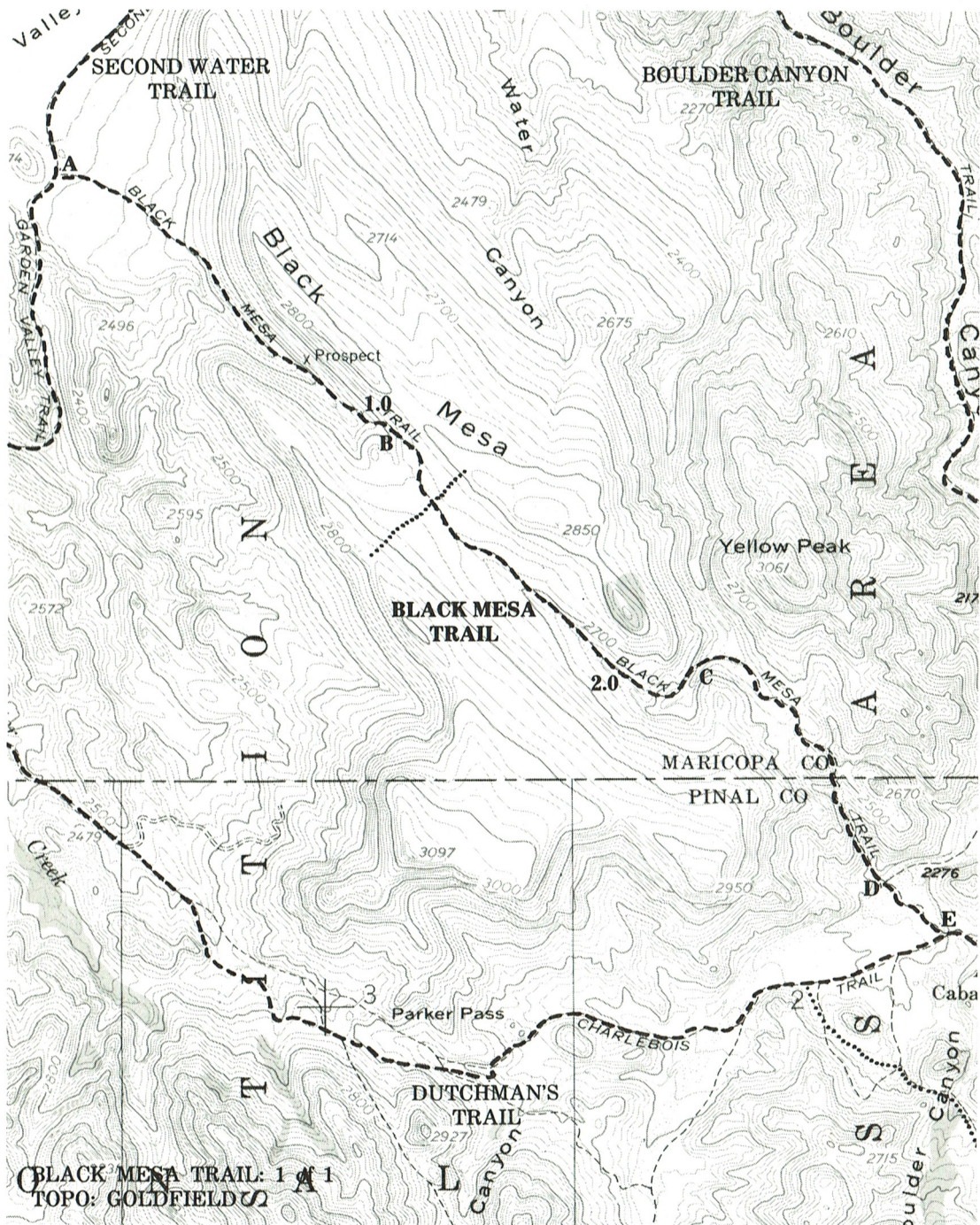
The trail leaves the canyon and levels out at 241-B [1.1]. Here there is a superb forest of chollas, and the ground is strewn with interesting, brightly-colored rocks. Weaver's Needle rears up in the distance ahead—one of the finest views you'll see of it. Wood rat dens are common among the chollas. The dens are impenetrable piles of cholla stems and other desert debris. Be especially careful when travelling through these dense stands of cholla. The stems that have fallen onto the trail can pierce tough boots, and a pocket comb or even pliers may be needed to remove them.

As the trail continues on Black Mesa, it passes through a small clearing in the cholla forest. There are two possible side jaunts from here—one going to the left/northeast for about 200 yards to a ridge, the other going to the right/southwest for about 400 yards to another ridge. From the left ridge there is a choice view of Battleship Mountain and Four Peaks far off in the distance; from the right ridge, there is a bird's-eye view of First Water Canyon below and part of First Water Road and the old parking area far to the right.

From the clearing the trail gradually heads downhill and soon enters a canyon where the descent is somewhat steeper, following along a rocky drainage. At 241-C [2.1] the trail stops following the drainage and swings to the right. The trail trends in a southeasterly direction and eventually drops down to Boulder Canyon. Along the descent to Boulder Canyon wash, Dutchman's Trail is visible out ahead in the open, relatively flat Boulder Basin. Palomino Mountain, Weaver's Needle, East Boulder Canyon and Black Top Mesa can also be seen from this stretch of trail.

The defined trail ends at Boulder Canyon wash [241-D; 2.7]. It is about 400 yards from the wash to the end of Black Mesa Trail at a junction

with Dutchman's Trail [241-E; 3.0]. There is no discernible trail along this last stretch. From the junction at 241-E, Dutchman's Trail goes left/east, soon passing the start of Bull Pass Trail 129. To the right/west Dutchman's Trail goes to the new First Water Trailhead some 4.2 miles distant.



BLUFF SPRING TRAIL 235

Summary: Bluff Spring Trail starts at a junction with Dutchman's Trail not far from Peralta Trailhead. It climbs a hillside and passes a junction with Cave Trail. Then it passes through Bark's Canyon and junctions with Needle Canyon Trail. It then follows along the southern end of Bluff Spring Mountain and ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail at a wooded grove in the vicinity of Crystal Spring. Total length of the trail, one way, is 3.4 miles.

Note that on the USGS map the names "Crystal Spring" and "Bluff Spring" are reversed. In keeping with tradition, Bluff Spring Trail will continue by that name although it does not go directly to Bluff Spring.

The start of the trail is reached from Peralta Trailhead. Dutchman's Trail 104 heads northeast from there for about 90 yards to a junction [235-A; 0.0] where Bluff Spring Trail begins. Dutchman's Trail continues up the right fork here, and Bluff Spring Trail branches to the left. Jojobas, teddy bear chollas, saguaros, foothill paloverdes and white brittlebush grow in the area. The rugged Dacite Cliffs are off to the left/west.

The first part of the trail is steep. At a little over 0.1 mile a well-used trail diagonals left for about 150 yards up to an old, partly-filled prospect hole where some small, bluish-colored rocks can be found among the tailings.

The main trail continues ahead. As it climbs there are some nice views of the tree-filled Peralta Canyon drainage off to the left and glimpses of Peralta Canyon Trail as it climbs up the drainage. Part of Dutchman's Trail coming from Miner's Summit can be seen off to the right/east.

The trail continues steeply uphill until it reaches a relatively flat area where *Cave Trail 233--partly a route--diagonals left at a junction [235-B; 0.7]. Bluff Spring Trail continues on the right. The grade still has some ups and downs but is less steep than the first stretch of trail. Near the 1-mile point the surrounding hillsides are covered primarily with small shrubs and a few saguaros and agaves. The terrain on all sides of the trail is rugged.

The trail reaches a small saddle [235-C; 1.1]

and ceases to climb. From the saddle it drops along a hillside into a canyon. Some mountain mahogany grows along the edge of the trail. When it blooms, the small, greenish-white flowers scent the air and attract swarms of honey bees. There may be a little water in tinajas (potholes) in the creek bottom.

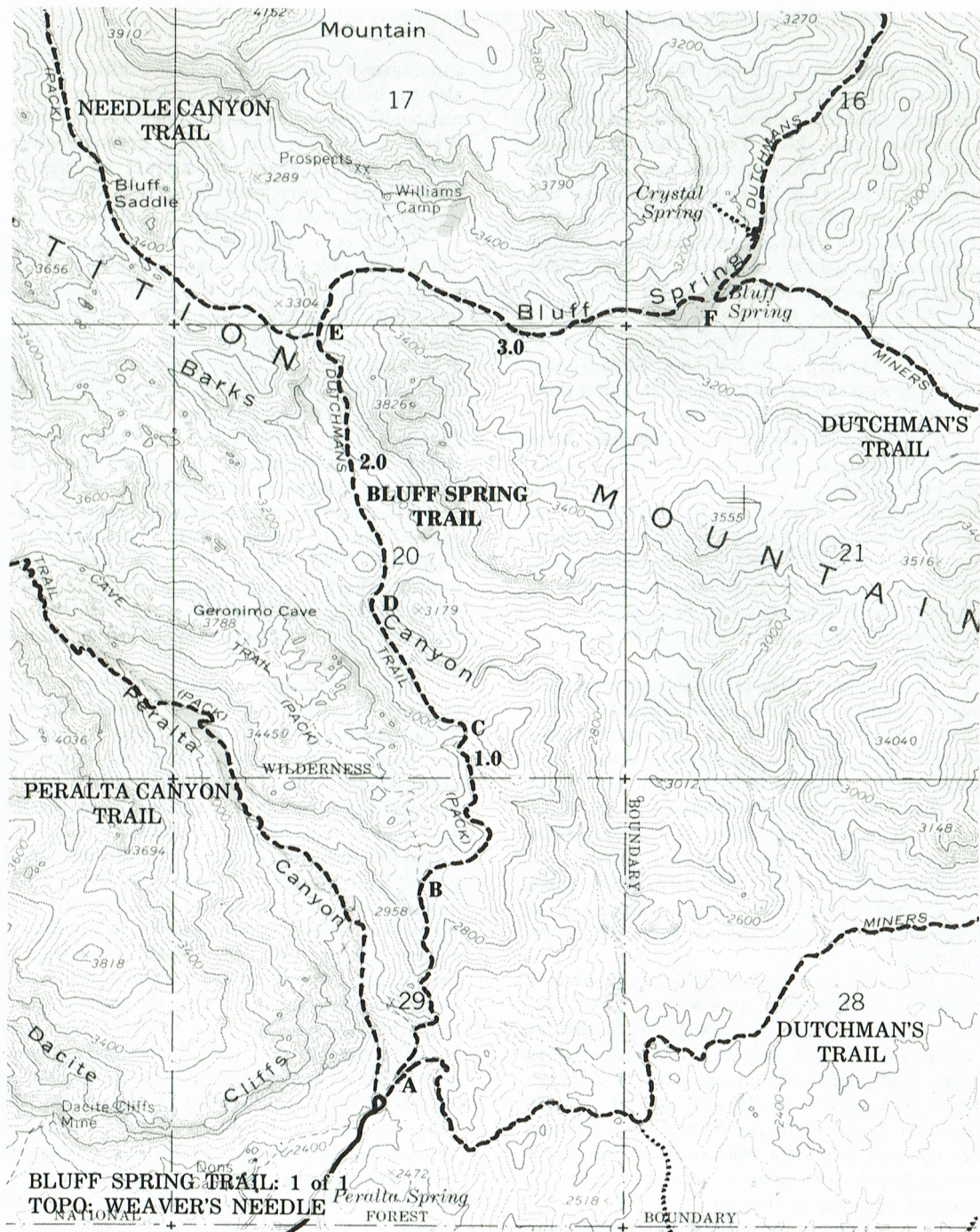
There is a potentially confusing area at 235-D [1.6] where there is a definite fork in the major drainage which the trail has been following. The left fork is filled with trees and boulders, and a trail of use goes up the right side of this left drainage. This is **not** the main trail. Bluff Spring Trail goes up the middle of the right fork, but the trail may not be apparent because of the smooth rock and sand in the wash. A short distance up the wash (about 125 yards), the trail goes left and leaves the wash.

After leaving it, the trail follows the wash rather closely before cutting over to the right/east side and climbing a dry, rocky hillside. There is a little bluff at 2.2 miles from which Bluff Spring Mountain can be seen ahead with the tip of Weaver's Needle looming up to the left of it.

The trail drops a short distance from the bluff to a junction [235-E; 2.3]. Needle Canyon Trail 234 starts here, crossing to the left side of the wash. Bluff Spring Trail continues on ahead/north toward Bluff Spring Mountain. Signs of prior mining activity can be seen part way up the side of the mountain.

After heading north a short distance, Bluff Spring Trail swings to the right/east toward the Crystal Spring area. From about the 2.6-mile point, the trail descends gradually. In general, it follows a narrow, dry wash, crossing it occasionally. There are some trails of use in the area, but they usually rejoin the main route.

Bluff Spring Trail ends where it junctions with Dutchman's Trail [235-F; 3.4] in the area of a nice thicket of sugar sumac, netleaf hackberry and small oaks near Crystal Spring. From this junction at 235-F, Dutchman's Trail going ahead soon swings northeast, passes Bluff Spring and continues generally north. Dutchman's Trail to the right soon crosses a wash and continues to Peralta Trailhead via Miner's Summit.



BOULDER CANYON TRAIL 103

Summary: This trail starts near Canyon Lake, climbs a hill, then drops into and follows La Barge wash upstream a short distance. It then climbs to Paint Mine Saddle before dropping into Boulder Canyon where it follows the wash upstream, passes the end of Second Water Trail and ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 7.3 miles.

Portions of the Boulder Canyon Trail involve a considerable elevation change. Parts are only routes, and some route-finding can be expected. As with many other trails and routes in the Superstitions, portions may not be passable immediately after a heavy rainstorm. Travel in the washes is often considerably slower than it is over sections of good trail.

The trail starts at the Canyon Lake Trailhead. There is a fence at the trailhead, and Boulder Canyon Trail starts [103-A; 0.0] just on the other side of it. There are two roads here—one that goes out along an arm of the lake, and another which is an old jeep track that heads up the hill, angling away from the lake. The trail follows the jeep route. At 103-B [0.1] there is a fork in the track. Here Boulder Canyon Trail follows the left fork which angles steeply uphill, gradually slimming down from a jeep trail to a hiking trail. As it climbs steadily, there are some nice views back to Canyon Lake and Mormon Flat Dam in the distance. At 103-C [0.9] the trail comes out onto a little ridge. Vegetation here is sparse—brittlebush, jojoba, foothill paloverde—but long views of the rugged country on all sides justify the steep, steady climb to get here. The Four Peaks in the Mazatzals can be seen back toward the north. Some of the more obvious landmarks include Geronimo Head, La Barge Canyon, Battleship Mountain, Weaver's Needle, Boulder Canyon and Superstition Mountain. As with many ridge routes in the Superstitions, the ground is strewn with interesting rocks in all sizes, shapes and colors.

From 103-C the trail follows along a ridge to a saddle [103-D; 1.3]. The trail drops down from there and traverses a drainage before climbing a little more. This is a pretty area—rocky, lots of

craggs, cliffs and ravines.

At 103-E [2.1] there is a potentially confusing spot where a trail of use goes right for about 50 yards to a viewpoint into La Barge Canyon. Boulder Canyon Trail is vague in the area of 103-E, but it cuts left over a rocky area. It then switchbacks steeply downhill and enters the rocky, sandy bottom of La Barge wash [103-F; 2.7]. The point where the trail comes out into the wash could be difficult to find by a hiker coming from the other direction. There is a small outcropping of reddish-brown rock at this spot, and a stony wash empties into La Barge about 30 feet upstream/south from where the trail comes in. Study this area carefully if you plan to return by the same route.

There is no trail as such in La Barge wash; the route heads upstream along the right/west side. Canyon ragweed, mesquite and desert hackberry grow in the bottom of the wash itself. The tan-yellow-green cliffs of Geronimo Head are on the left/east; Battleship Mountain is the squarish (from this view) formation ahead on the right. The route becomes a trail where it exits on the right/west side of the wash at 103-G [3.1], but it would be easy to miss if you weren't watching closely for it.

After leaving La Barge, the trail crosses over to Boulder Canyon by way of Paint Mine Saddle which is a low spot in the divide. There is a sudden change in the landscape as the trail leaves La Barge wash and climbs through an interesting area of gravelly red soil and rock. The trail may be faint in a few places along this section. There are a number of small prospect holes in the area, and the dusty green desert vegetation appears to be several shades brighter against the rich red ground.

The trail climbs to Paint Mine Saddle [103-H; 3.4], then heads down the other side of the divide. Indian Paint Mine is just to the left of the trail at 103-I [just over 3.4]. There are some rock walls, a little concrete work and a mine shaft with a ladder starting part way down. Warning: This mine shaft would be very easy to skid into should you approach too closely, and a fall into it would probably be fatal. Evidence of blasting can be seen in the reddish rock

outcroppings.

From Indian Paint Mine the trail continues downhill into Boulder Canyon wash. The place where it actually enters the wash [103-J; 3.5] might be difficult to spot by hikers coming from the other direction (south to north). Hikers planning to come back by the same route should carefully study the landmarks in the area. The trail lies in the small saddle (103-H) between Battleship Mountain and the large, tilt-topped bluff to the north of Battleship.

There is no defined trail after reaching Boulder Canyon. From here to the end, the route follows the wash upstream, sometimes in it, sometimes along the benches, usually over smooth boulders and sand. Second Water Canyon enters Boulder Canyon wash on the right/west at 103-K [just under 3.9]. There is a fairly distinct, wide trough of smooth, light-colored rock at this point. Just a short distance further upstream/south in Boulder Canyon wash is the end of Second Water Trail 236 [103-L; 3.9]. This trail is not obvious from Boulder wash and could easily be missed. If you wish to find it, once you come to where Second Water Canyon and wash enter Boulder wash at 103-K, climb up on the right/west bank of Boulder, and follow the bank upstream until you intersect Second Water Trail.

Boulder Canyon Trail (route) continues upstream from the junctions with Second Water Canyon and Second Water Trail. It follows the main Boulder wash through areas of rounded boulders and sand. Some trails of use along the sandy benches make the going a little smoother here and there. We have mapped the route directly up the middle of the wash, but keep in mind that there are at least some trails of use along the benches in places. The elevation increases gradually as the route continues up the canyon. Desert broom is the most common shrub in the wash itself. Canyon ragweed, mesquite, Arizona rosewood, desert hackberry and jumping cholla are common along the benches. The hillsides are steep and rocky on both sides of the wash.

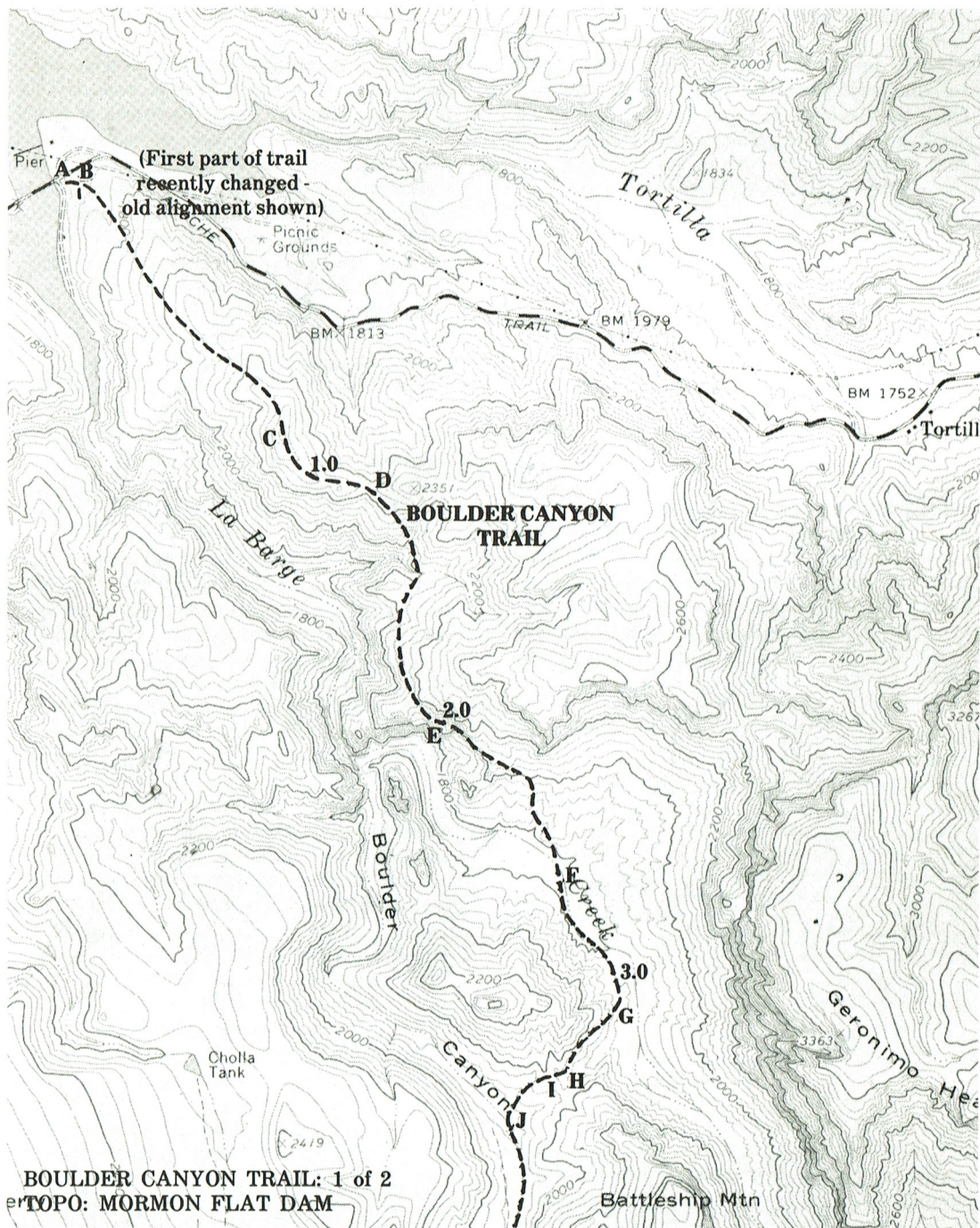
The first major side drainage above the Second Water Canyon junction enters Boulder wash on the right/west at 103-M [4.6]. At the 5-mile mark, the tip of Weaver's Needle is

visible ahead. *Cavalry Trail 239 can be seen climbing the side of a cone-shaped hill ahead on the left. While parts of the trail climbing along the hill are easy to spot from the wash, the actual point where Cavalry Trail begins [103-N; 5.3] is difficult to locate. A hiker coming from the opposite direction (south to north) would find this trail much more difficult to spot.

Farther upstream, Needle Canyon enters Boulder Canyon on the left/east [103-O; 6.4]. An old route coming over the divide from Needle Canyon enters on the left/east side of Boulder wash at 103-P [6.6]. That route is difficult to find from this end as it doesn't show up very well on the hillside.

Boulder Canyon wash widens at 103-Q [6.8]. The wash forks here, and Boulder Canyon Trail (route) follows the left fork which is heading in the general direction of Palomino Mountain at this point. The right/southwest fork junctions with Black Mesa Trail 241 another 0.5 mile upstream. Boulder Canyon Trail continues as a route up the left fork to a junction with Dutchman's Trail 104 [103-R; 7.3]. Hopefully this last section of the trail (route) will be better defined in the future. For hikers picking up Boulder Canyon Trail from along Dutchman's Trail, the route heading north leaves from between the little saddle just east of the end of Black Mesa Trail and the start of Bull Pass Trail 129.

Note: As this book went to press, we were informed by Tonto National Forest that a slight adjustment was being made along the first part of this trail. The change will apparently affect only the first half mile or so.



BULL PASS TRAIL 129

Summary: This trail starts at a junction with Dutchman's Trail between Boulder Basin and the site of Aylor's old "Caballo Camp." It climbs steeply to Bull Pass, then descends steadily to Needle Canyon. It then continues to a junction with another section of Dutchman's Trail where it ends not far from Marsh Valley. Total length of the trail, one way, is 1.6 miles.

The Bull Pass Trail is a short-cut trail for hikers traveling between First Water and La Barge Canyon, or vice versa. While not a very long trail, the first section to Bull Pass is steep.

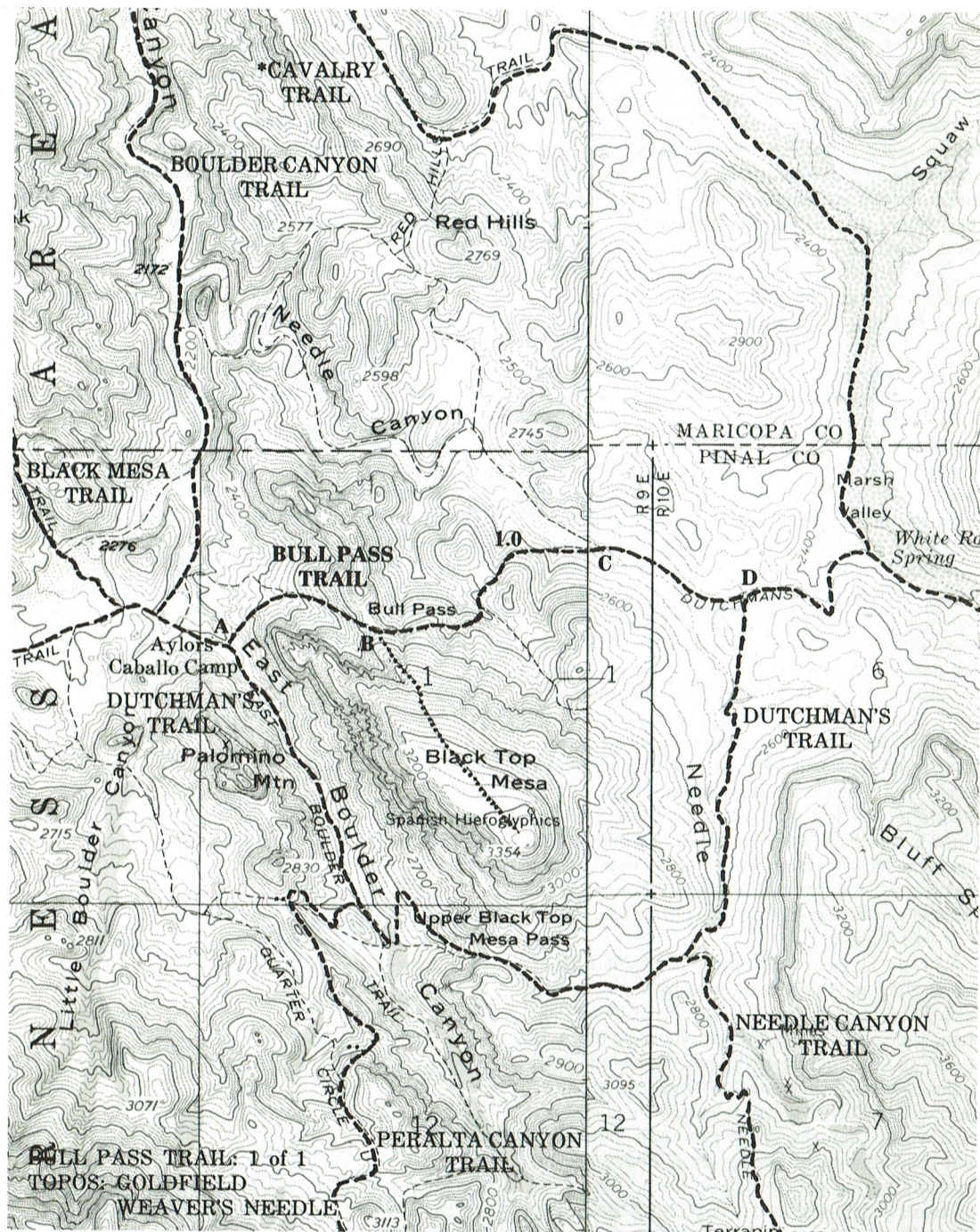
The start of the trail is reached from First Water Trailhead. Proceed southeast 0.4 mile from the new First Water Trailhead to the old parking area, then take Dutchman's Trail 104 southeast for 4.1 miles to the point where Bull Pass Trail starts [129-A; 0.0] on the left. Saguaro, snakeweed, prickly pears and mesquites are common near the start of the trail. Palomino Mountain is just to the right/south of the trail. Dutchman's Trail proceeds ahead into East Boulder Canyon, and Black Top Mesa is the large mountain just to the left/east of East Boulder.

About 70 yards after it leaves Dutchman's Trail, Bull Pass Trail crosses East Boulder wash where shrub live oak and desert broom grow. After crossing the wash, the trail climbs all the way to Bull Pass. Part way up to the pass, the hillside on the left of the trail is dominated by white brittlebush, in contrast to the hillside on the right of the trail which is dominated by snakeweed, jojoba and some canotia (one of Arizona's so-called crucifixion thorns). Bull Pass is at 129-B [0.5].

From the pass itself, there is a faint trail of use angling up the hillside on the right/southeast. This side trail goes to the top of Black Top Mesa and the so-called Spanish hieroglyphics. It is not an established trail, and the trail itself fizzles out and becomes a route soon after leaving Bull Pass. The route climbs very steeply for a while, then the grade gradually tapers off as it reaches a nice, grassy area. There are tin cans and an old prospect hole here. The route (no trail) continues to the far top of Black Top Mesa. The top of the mesa is wide and open,

covered with black basalt and grass. Views from the top are among the finest in the Superstitions. From the far/southeast end, Needle Canyon is below with Bluff Spring Mountain just beyond it. Other features visible from here include Black Mesa, Malpais Mountain, Black Mountain, La Barge Canyon, Charlebois Canyon, Black Top Pass, East Boulder Canyon and Superstition Mountain. Be careful if you go looking for the "Spanish hieroglyphics"--the cliffs are hazardous.

From Bull Pass at 129-B, the main trail heads steeply downhill. At 129-C [1.2] the trail reaches Needle Canyon. It continues ahead a very short distance and crosses Needle Canyon wash. From this wash, the trail gradually climbs through a relatively open area to a junction [129-D; 1.6] with Dutchman's Trail. From this junction, Dutchman's Trail goes ahead/east to La Barge Canyon. The part of Dutchman's Trail going to the right/south goes to upper Needle Canyon, then climbs to Black Top Pass. As viewed from the junction at 129-D, the large tan mountain off to the right/southeast is Bluff Spring Mountain, and Weaver's Needle shows prominently to the right of it.



COFFEE FLAT TRAIL 108

Summary: From where it starts at the Quarter Circle U Ranch, this trail heads east through typical Sonoran desert toward Reed's Water, then follows Randolph Canyon upstream to Dripping Spring. From there it follows Fraser Canyon upstream to where it ends near JF Ranch. Total length of the trail, one way, is 8.9 miles.

The trail starts at the Quarter Circle U Ranch Trailhead which is included in our Peralta Trailhead description. Quarter Circle U Ranch is private property, and access to the trailhead is at the discretion of the owners. Hikers should check this out prior to planning a hike starting here. Horses have been available for rent here for both day trips and custom pack trips.

Coffee Flat Trail starts [108-A; 0.0] as a two-track road following the left/north side of a corral. At the end of the corral and about 70 yards from the start, it goes right at a fork. (The left fork goes north 0.8 mile to the national forest boundary, then uphill for 0.3 mile to join Dutchman's Trail 104.) The right fork crosses a wash at 0.2 mile where there are some desertwillows (not a common tree in the Superstitions). Typical Sonoran desert plants along here include saguaro, mesquite, turpentine bush, foothill paloverde, jumping cholla, buckhorn cholla, desert hackberry and Engelmann's prickly pear. This first section of trail continues to be a two-track road.

At 108-B [just under 1.0] an obvious trail diagonals left/northeast in the direction of Miner's Needle. (This non-maintained trail climbs gradually for 1.1 miles and joins Dutchman's Trail at a point below Miner's Needle.)

From the fork at 108-B, Coffee Flat Trail continues ahead as a two-track road to a tin-roofed cattle shed [108-C; 1.3]. The trail drops left here, passing through a corral to the wilderness boundary at the far edge of the corral. From here the trail may be vague for a short distance. It goes a little over 30 yards toward Miner's Needle, then turns right/northeast. The trail then heads in the general direction of "Hill X" on the map. At about 1.6 miles the trail is generally well defined except

for occasional areas where the route is vague for short distances. At 1.7 miles the hole in Miner's Needle is visible off to the left/north, as is part of Dutchman's Trail descending from Miner's Summit.

From Quarter Circle U Ranch to about the 2-mile point, the general trend of the route is gradually uphill. From about the 2-mile point, the trail climbs somewhat more steeply along the side of "Hill X" before heading downhill at 108-D [2.5]. Jojobas and ocotillos are common along the hillsides. As the trail drops on the far side of the hill, there are some nice views of the bluffs and mountains ahead.

There is a junction of sorts at 108-E [3.3] where Coffee Flat Trail goes left/east. The junction may be easy to miss. If it is not obvious, it may be easier to find by hiking down to Whitlow Corral--a pole corral about 100 yards to the right/south in Whitlow Canyon--then hiking back up to the junction. The junction is just southeast of a drainage fork.

From the junction at 108-E the trail climbs to a broad saddle [108-F; 3.6], then drops down before again climbing to the 4-mile point. It then swings around a hillside and heads downhill to cross the wash in Coffee Flat Canyon at 108-G [4.3]. This crossing is a short distance downstream from an old windmill at Reed's Water and just upstream from the wilderness boundary.

There is a nice mesquite thicket with seepwillows and desert broom growing in the wash in the general area of the crossing at Reed's Water.

A short distance beyond the crossing at 108-G, a side trail branches off the Coffee Flat Trail and goes left/north toward Reed's Camp. The first part of this side route is vague, but it passes to the right of the windmill. At the 0.4 mile point of this side route, the trail--which is an old road here--crosses the second of two drainages and follows the left/west side of this drainage uphill to Reed's Camp (0.8 mile). There is a mine tailing on the hillside. Debris scattered about the site includes such items as a rusty old car frame, rotting timbers, sheet metal air ducts and a blower fan, a dangerous-looking drift that

has begun to cave in (don't enter) and other trash.

Back at the Reed's Camp route/Coffee Flat Trail junction at 108-G, the Coffee Flat Trail heads downstream on the left/east side of the wash, passes through the wilderness boundary fence, then drops south for about 130 yards to Randolph Canyon [108-H; 4.4]. There are several Fremont cottonwoods and another windmill in the area where Coffee Flat Trail turns left/east and starts following Randolph Canyon upstream. Here the trail becomes a route through the canyon, following occasional trails of use along the benches as well as the bottom of the wash itself. Desert broom, mesquite and desert hackberry grow along the sides; seepwillows and an occasional cottonwood grow in the bottom. There may be a few small pools of water among the rocks and sand that pave the canyon bottom. Near the 5-mile mark the big, squared-off rock formation to the south is Buzzards' Roost. The route through the canyon is gradually uphill.

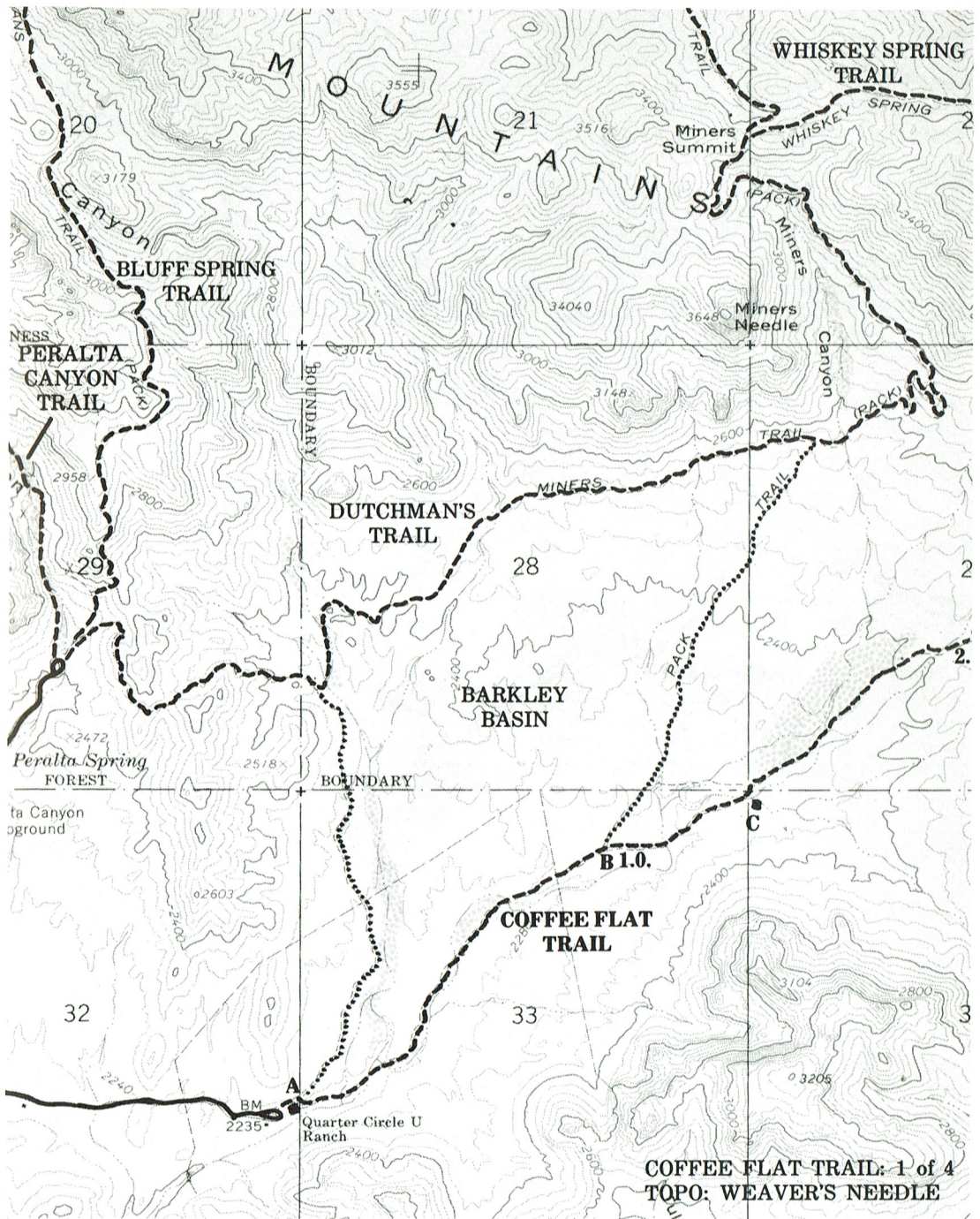
At 108-I [just under 6.0] there is a fork in the drainage. From here Randolph Canyon swings upstream to the left/north; Coffee Flat Trail continues ahead/east into Fraser Canyon. A short distance before this fork in the drainage, Dripping Spring is situated over on the right/south side of Randolph Canyon. There is a concrete tank here that often holds water, and moisture seeps down the reddish-pink cliffs. This is a lush spot in the spring, humming with insects and made green by hanging plants and shaded by several netleaf hackberry trees. Cardinals and solitary vireos (and Herefords) are among the animals attracted to the area in springtime.

From the drainage fork at 108-I, *Red Tanks Trail 107 is the route going north up Randolph Canyon. Coffee Flat Trail continues east from the junction, now going in an easterly direction up the somewhat-narrower Fraser Canyon. Horses usually have to take occasional side trails along the benches to avoid slick rock or boulders in the wash, but foot travelers can generally keep to the wash itself. There are some nice sycamores just as the route enters Fraser Canyon. At 108-J [6.6] Musk Hog drainage enters from the right/south; a little

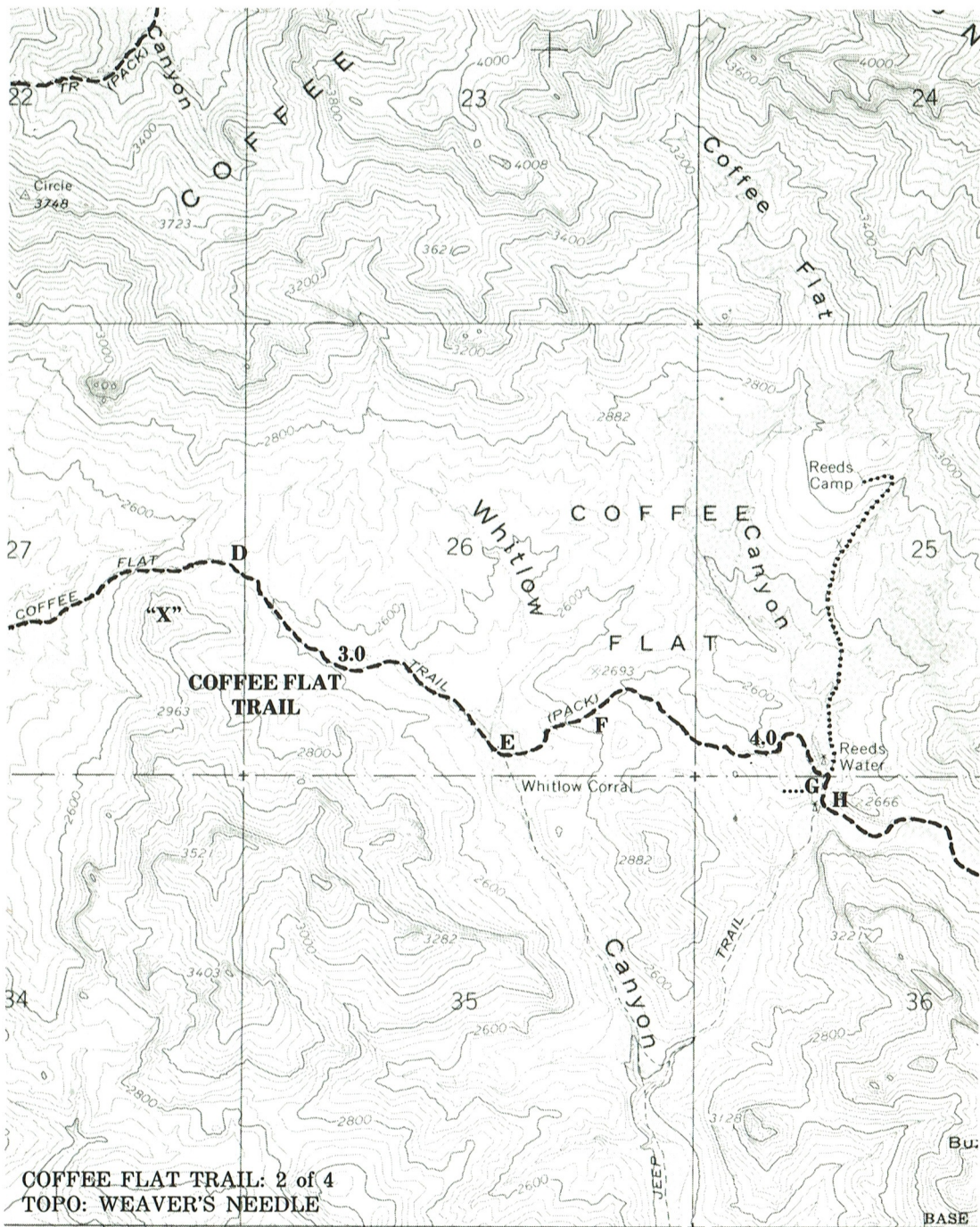
further upstream, Whetrock Canyon enters from the right/south at 108-K [7.2].

As the route continues upstream, the canyon tends to open up. There is a very large cottonwood in the wash at 8.4 miles. About 150 yards further upstream from this tree, the trail sneaks out through the mesquites on the left side of the wash [108-L; 8.5]. JF Ranch can also be reached by continuing up the main wash from here, but it is necessary to negotiate several fences and, perhaps, several hound dogs near the privately-owned ranch buildings.

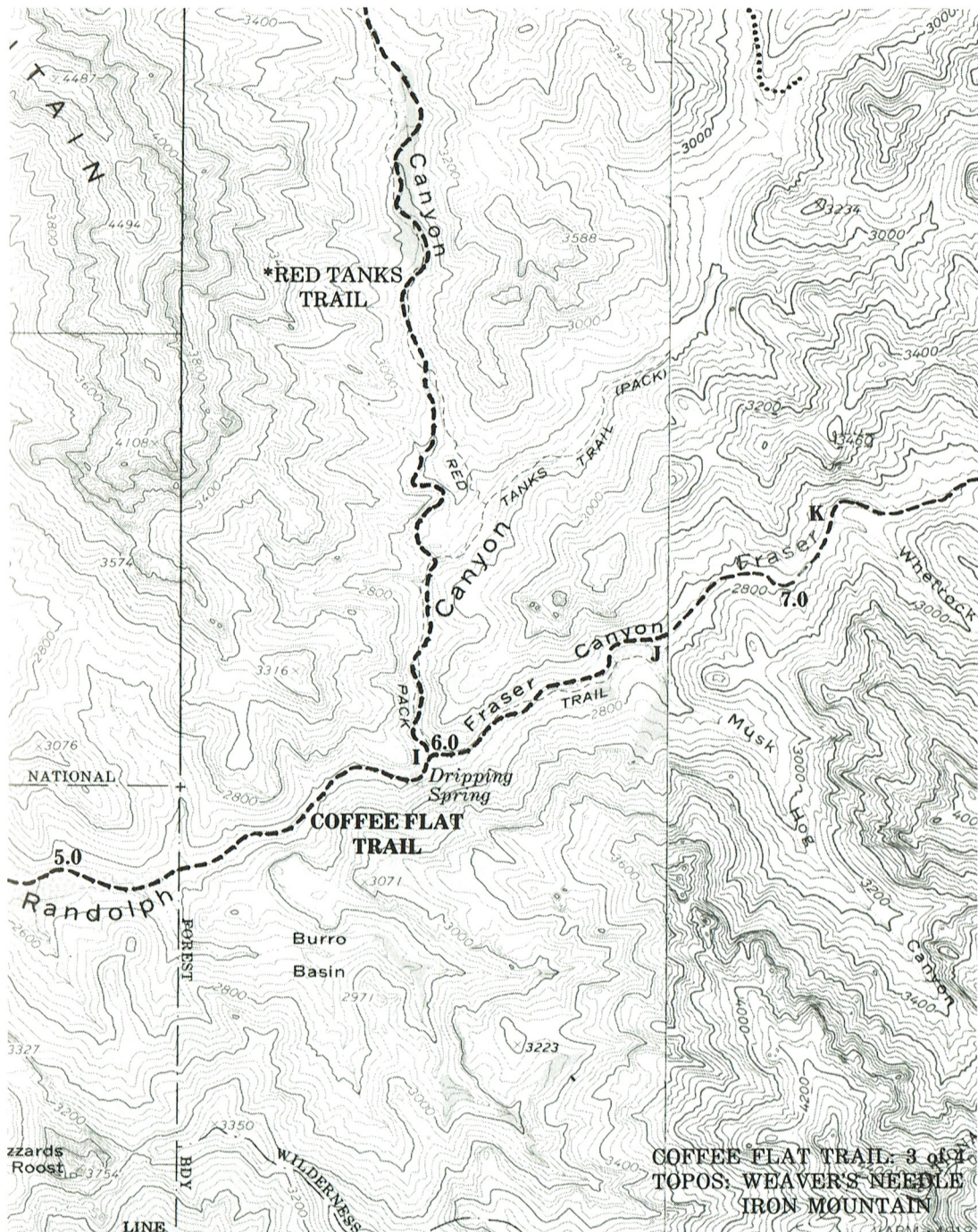
After leaving the main wash at 108-L, the trail goes gradually uphill, passing through a fence about 60 yards from Fraser Canyon. From here the trail parallels a barbed-wire fence located between the trail and the wash. The trail goes around a corral [108-M; 8.9] about 0.5 mile after leaving Fraser wash and ends here where a road enters JF Ranch. The road going left from the end of the trail is FS 172 (see "JF Ranch Trailhead"). JF Trail 106 starts a short distance left/ahead on FS 172, taking off up Fraser Canyon.



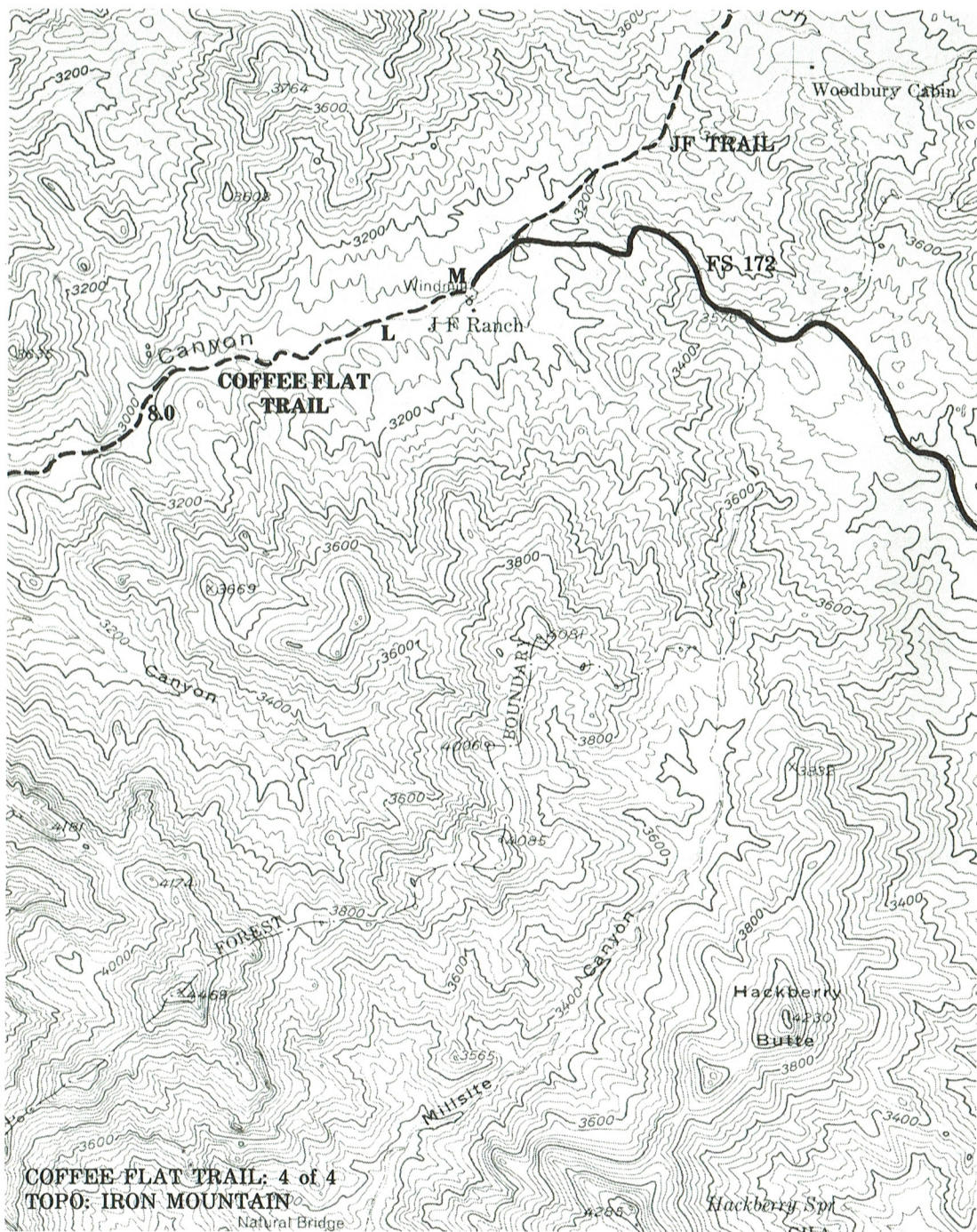
COFFEE FLAT TRAIL: 1 of 4
TOPO: WEAVER'S NEEDLE



COFFEE FLAT TRAIL: 2 of 4
 TOPO: WEAVER'S NEEDLE



COFFEE FLAT TRAIL: 3 of 4
TOPOS: WEAVER'S NEEDLE
IRON MOUNTAIN



DUTCHMAN'S TRAIL 104

Summary: In our description, the trail starts at First Water, proceeds east to Boulder Basin, goes up East Boulder Canyon, climbs to Black Top Pass, drops down into Needle Canyon, then proceeds north to La Barge Canyon. After following La Barge for a distance, it heads up Bluff Spring Canyon to Crystal Spring. From the spring area it goes to Miner's Summit, drops down and proceeds west to the Peralta Trailhead. Total length of the trail, one way, is 17.8 miles.

Dutchman's Trail is the longest maintained trail in the Superstitions. There are many possible loops and side trips that can be made from Dutchman's; and many hikers hike it from the opposite end at Peralta Trailhead.

Dutchman's Trail, as described in this book, is reached from First Water Trailhead. From the new parking area at the First Water Trailhead, an old road continues on the other side of the barrier at the wilderness boundary. This road drops down and heads east to an old fork at 0.3 mile. The right fork continues from here for about 100 yards to the old parking area. Just after we made our descriptions and maps, the trailhead for Dutchman's Trail was changed to its present location. In order to keep the mileages on our maps accurate, we are starting the mileages and description of Dutchman's Trail from the old parking area. When we put out a future edition of this book, we will undoubtedly start our mileages from the new parking area. Keep in mind that, for practical purposes, Dutchman's Trail is actually 0.4 mile longer than the mileages indicate in our book if it is measured from the new parking area.

From the old parking area [104-A; 0.0] Dutchman's Trail proceeds in a southeasterly direction. About 50 yards beyond the start, there is a trail junction [104-B] where Second Water Trail 236 starts and goes left/east as described in this book. Dutchman's Trail continues ahead. The terrain is relatively flat and strewn with smooth boulders. Jojoba, turpentine bush, foothill paloverde, a few saguaros and Engelmann's prickly pears are among the more common plants in the area. The trail tends to climb gradually, crossing First

Water wash several times. The trail reaches the first of several small saddles at 104-C [1.3]. Portions of the first part of this trail follow sections of an old road. At 104-D [1.4] the remains of an old vehicle can be seen off to the left of the trail.

The trail continues over two passes. Beyond the second pass [104-E; 2.2] the grade is downhill. Weaver's Needle is ahead and slightly to the right, and there is a nice view of Black Mesa off to the left. At 104-F [3.3] the trail crosses the wash in Boulder Canyon. The *Old Quarter Circle U Trail (not a maintained trail) takes off on the right/south at 104-G [3.6]; Dutchman's Trail continues ahead.

Dutchman's Trail passes through a wide, open area generally referred to as Boulder Basin. At 104-H [3.8] there is a junction with the end of Black Mesa Trail 241. This junction may not be obvious; when we researched this book, the end of Black Mesa Trail was only a route at this point.

Not far beyond the Black Mesa Trail junction, Dutchman's Trail climbs a small hill. Just prior to climbing this hill there is an apparent trail junction [104-I; 3.9] where a trail of use takes off on the left. The main trail continues over the hill and drops down the other side where it crosses a drainage or wash at 104-J [just under 4.0]. Boulder Canyon Trail 103 ends here, but it is only a route at this point. At 104-K [4.1] Bull Pass Trail 129 (as we describe it) starts by bearing left/northeast from Dutchman's Trail. Many hikers heading into La Barge Canyon take the Bull Pass Trail, part of which can be seen heading up the hillside to the left. At 104-K, Palomino Mountain is to the right; East Boulder Canyon and the tan-yellow cliffs of Black Top Mesa are directly ahead.

Not far beyond the Bull Pass Trail junction, Dutchman's Trail passes the site of Aylor's old "Caballo Camp." A few rusted tin cans are about the only evidence that the camp existed. The trail continues along the right side of East Boulder Creek. The grade is gradually uphill with Black Top Mesa on the left (note the dark basalt on the mesa top), and Palomino Mountain is on the right. As the route continues, look for a

small natural "bridge" high up on Palomino Mountain. This relatively short stretch of the Dutchman's Trail through East Boulder Canyon is beside a stony drainage bottom where there may be some pockets of water. White-throated swifts can often be seen and heard as they swoosh past the steep cliffs. Look for them in similar areas throughout the western Superstitions.

There is a trail junction at **104-L [4.8]** where Peralta Canyon Trail 102 enters from the right and ends as described in this book. Dutchman's Trail continues ahead to **104-M [4.9]** where it crosses to the opposite side of East Boulder wash. Just before it crosses, there is a trail of use that continues up the right side of East Boulder. There are some nice thickets of sugar sumac, barberry, desert hackberry and catclaw bordering the wash in this area.

At **104-N [just under 5.0]** there is an easy-to-miss trail fork. The right fork is steep and not recommended; the left fork is Dutchman's Trail, which follows a long switchback up the side of Black Top Mesa to Black Top Pass **[104-O; 5.5]**. Viewed from the pass, Bluff Spring Mountain is directly ahead, Black Top Mesa with its dark caprock and yellow-tan sides is to the left, Weaver's Needle is to the right, and Palomino Mountain is behind in the general direction from which the trail has come.

Two trails, more or less parallel, leave Black Top Pass on the far side. They eventually join, but the right-hand trail has been abandoned for the most part. Dutchman's Trail drops directly down from the pass by way of the left-hand (lower) trail. At **104-P [5.9]** Needle Canyon Trail 234 enters from the right/southeast and ends as described in this book. Dutchman's Trail continues downhill and goes across the narrow, rocky bottom of Needle Canyon **[104-Q; 6.1]**. There is a nice woods in this part of Needle Canyon—sugar sumac, hollyleaf buckthorn, mesquite, shrub live oak and desert hackberry. The trail heads north after the crossing, following along the right/east side of Needle Canyon. At **104-R [6.6]**, just beyond the north end of Bluff Spring Mountain, there is a trail of use going to the right, and cattle traffic has obscured the route to some degree. Dutchman's Trail keeps to the left here and soon

enters Needle Canyon wash which is about 100 feet to the left of the main trail from 104-R. From this general area, Malpais Mountain is directly ahead, and Black Mountain is off to the right ahead. The trail soon exits from the wash on the right side and crosses a relatively flat area to a junction **[104-S; 6.9]**. Here Bull Pass Trail 129 enters from the left/west and ends as described in this book. The vegetation here is thin, consisting of snakeweed, Engelmann's prickly pear and a few scraggly mesquites.

From the junction at 104-S, Dutchman's Trail heads east. It crosses the flat for a short distance before dropping into La Barge Canyon in the area of Marsh Valley **[104-T; 7.3]**. There is another nice woods here, with a few Fremont cottonwoods among the usual sugar sumacs, mesquites and desert hackberries. The trail follows La Barge Canyon upstream along the right side of the bottom of the wash. There may be varying amounts of running water along here, but it cannot be depended upon and should be treated if used for drinking. As the trail continues up La Barge, the towering, rugged walls of Black Mountain are on the left, with teddy bear chollas growing up the base to the sheer walls. A few sotols grow along the trail.

Cottonwoods and sycamores grow in the area of Charlebois Spring in the canyon which is ahead and to the left. The trail crosses La Barge wash at **104-U [8.5]**. It would be easy to lose the trail in this area. After crossing, it goes left up the opposite side of La Barge toward Charlebois Spring. Before reaching the spring, there is a trail junction **[104-V; 8.7]**. Here a trail of use goes to Charlebois Spring while Dutchman's Trail diagonals back to the right/south and climbs to a little saddle **[104-W; 8.8]**. *Peters Trail 105 enters from the left/northeast at this saddle, although the last time we hiked through here, Peters Trail was vague in this area. From the saddle, Dutchman's Trail drops down to continue up La Barge Canyon. At **104-X [9.3]** the trail is on the right side of the wash, and Music Canyon is off on the left. There is a nice stand of seepwillows where moisture collects in the area, and a few cottonwoods, Arizona sycamores and large willows grow in the wash.

The trail continues to follow along La Barge. A few hundred yards beyond the Music

Canyon drainage, the trail passes through a small copse of Arizona walnuts, Palmer oaks and desert hackberries. Water sometimes muddies the trail here. At **104-Y [9.9]** there is a trail junction where *Red Tanks Trail 107 goes left/northeast. From the junction, Music Mountain is off to the left, Bluff Spring Mountain is to the right, and La Barge Spring is just a short distance down Red Tanks Trail on the far side of La Barge Canyon wash.

From the junction at **104-Y**, Dutchman's Trail goes right/south. It climbs gradually along the side of Bluff Spring Canyon through a barren area thinly vegetated by snakeweed, a few agaves, some jumping and buckhorn chollas, Engelmann's prickly pears and mesquites. The trail continues to climb, at one spot passing an old prospector's pit with some wood shoring in the bottom. The trail drops into the bottom of Bluff Spring Canyon at **104-Z [11.2]**. It continues to a fork in the drainage [**104-AA; 11.4**] where it turns up the right-hand fork. As it continues upstream, there is a small hill on the left where five Utah junipers grow in stark contrast to the saguaros growing next to them.

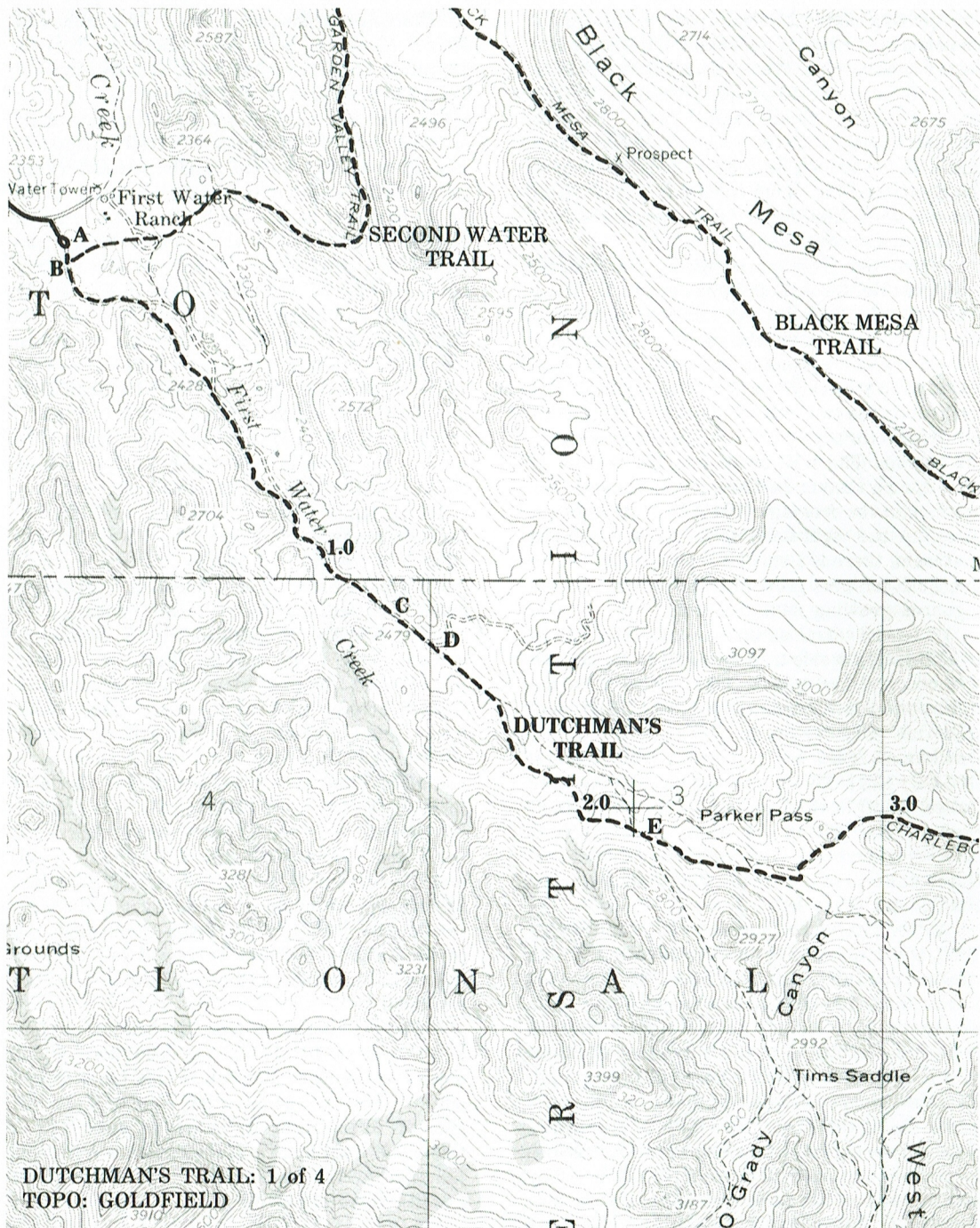
A fenced corral is located next to the trail at **104-BB [12.0]**. A side trail takes off at the far end of the corral and goes a short distance to the right up to Bluff Spring. (Note: The USGS map calls this "Crystal Spring.") From the corral, Dutchman's Trail continues to a trail junction [**104-CC; 12.1**]. This is the Crystal Spring area (called "Bluff Spring" on the USGS map). Bluff Spring Trail 235 enters from the right/west here and ends as described in this book. Dutchman's Trail crosses the drainage near **104-CC** and turns left.

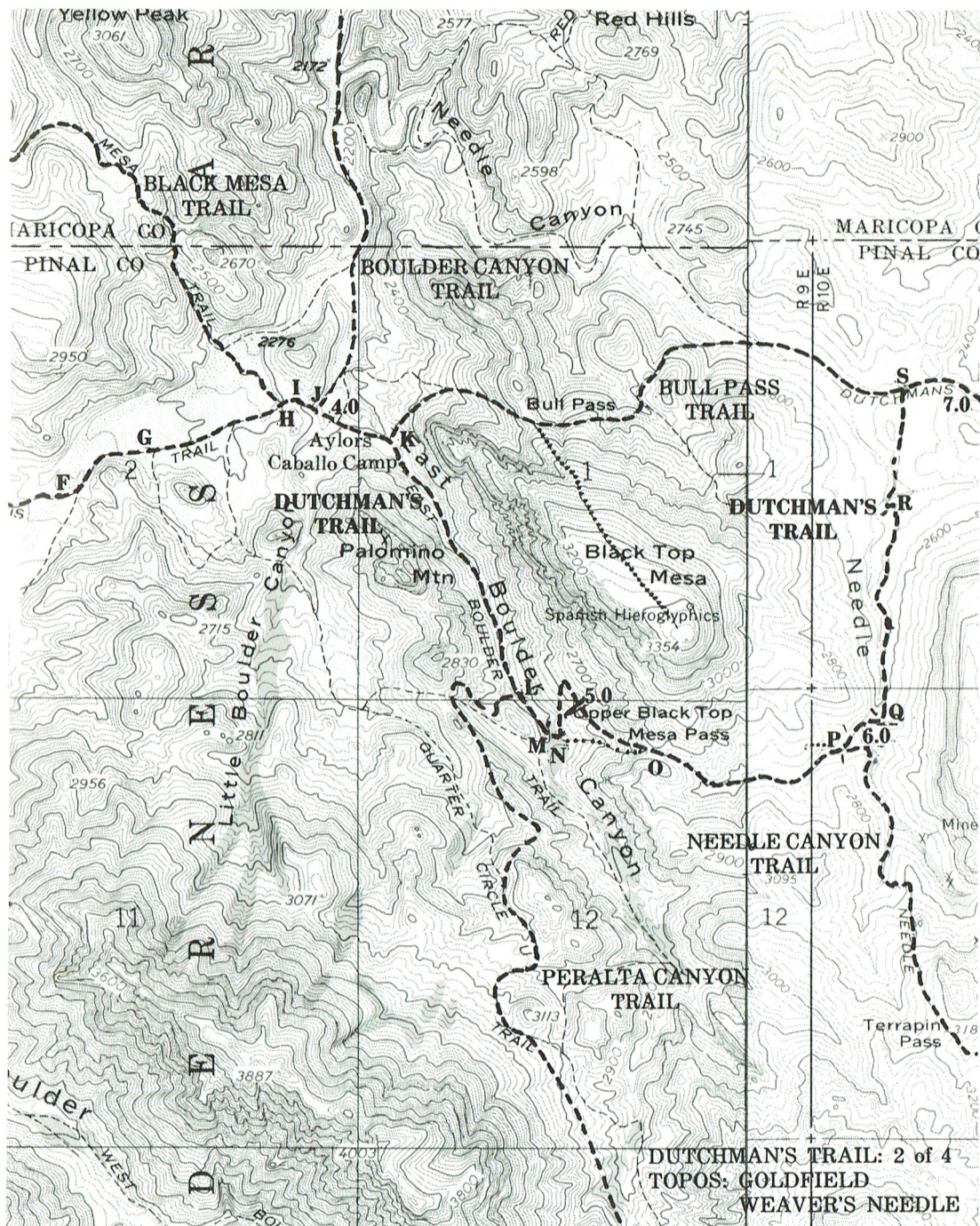
After leaving the junction with Bluff Spring Trail, the trail tends to climb gradually through a rather open area that is well used by cattle. At a trail fork [**104-DD; 13.2**] the right fork is a shortcut trail to Miner's Summit; the main trail crosses the drainage to the left side and climbs by a longer, more gradual route to the summit. Miner's Summit [**104-EE; 13.5**] is a saddle from which there are some fine views to the south, especially early in the morning when the various formations are backlit. Miner's Needle is easily identified—it is the rock formation with a hole through it. Looking back/north and clockwise

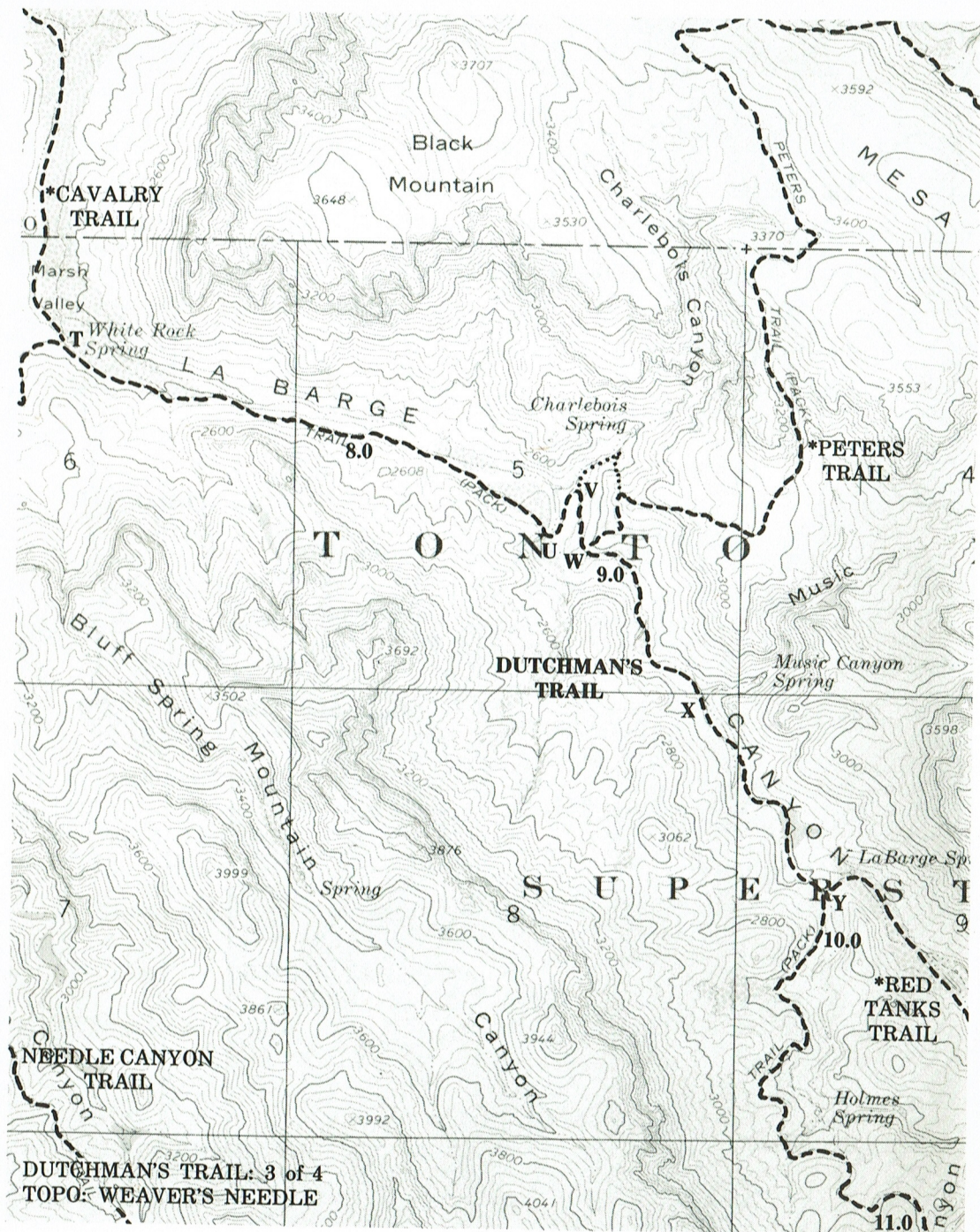
are Bluff Spring Mountain, Black Mountain and Music Mountain with the knob of Tortilla Mountain sticking up behind it. Whiskey Spring Trail 238 goes east from Miner's Summit. (This is the start of Whiskey Spring Trail as described in this book.) Dutchman's Trail diagonals steeply downhill from the saddle, switchbacking to the flatter area far below. Jojobas, saguaros, brittlebush and turpentine bush grow along this descent. Just beyond the 15-mile point, the steep trail reaches the bottom of the switchbacks [**104-FF**]. From here it goes in a westerly direction, and the grade is more gradual. At **104-GG [15.3]** a side trail that is not a system trail branches off to the left and joins Coffee Flat Trail to the south. (See "Coffee Flat Trail 108" for additional information on this side trail.)

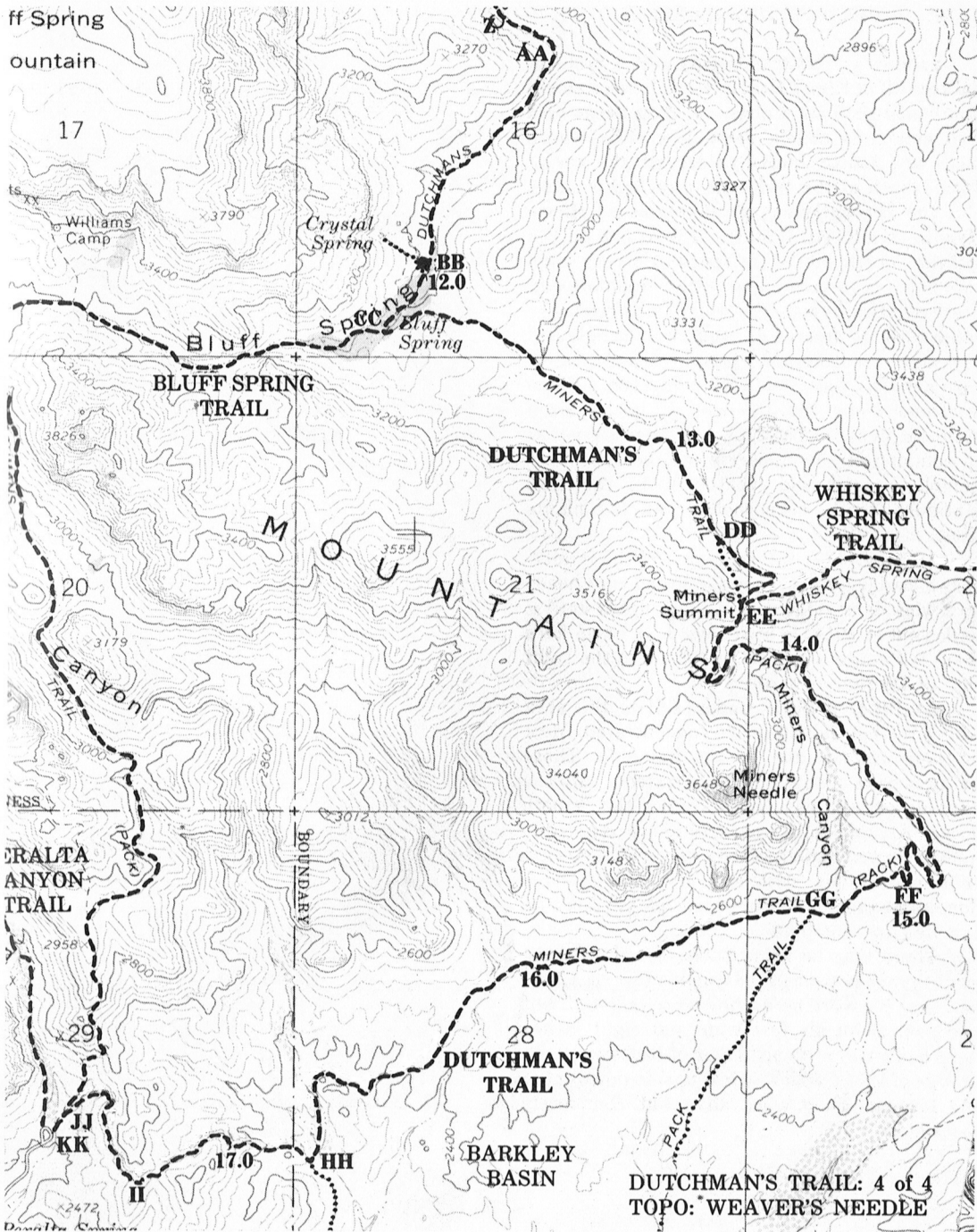
To the left of Dutchman's Trail along this stretch is a wide, gently sloping area known as Barkley Basin. This area is named after an early ranching family that ran cattle in the Superstitions for many years. Vegetation bordering this stretch of trail is particularly lush and varied—foothill paloverde, jojoba, saguaro, turpentine bush, brittlebush, teddy bear cholla, fairy duster, ocotillo, Engelmann's and sprawling prickly pear, globe mallow, buckhorn cholla, barrel cacti, jumping cholla and Mormon tea. Desert broom, canyon ragweed, desert hackberry and spineless hopsage grow in areas where the trail crosses rocky washes. A non-maintained side trail to Quarter Circle U Ranch goes left at **104-HH [16.8]**. This point is just beyond where the trail crosses a fair-sized wash and begins to climb. Dutchman's Trail, which continues to the right from this junction, soon passes the wilderness boundary and climbs to a saddle [**104-II; 17.3**]. From the saddle, the parking area at Peralta Trailhead can be seen below, and the Dacite Cliffs are just beyond the trailhead.

The trail descends from the saddle, passing a junction at **104-JJ [17.7]**. (The trail which enters on the right just before this junction is a trail of use.) At **104-JJ**, Bluff Spring Trail 235 goes off to the right and starts as described in this book. Dutchman's Trail continues from this junction to the parking area at the end of Peralta Road [**104-KK; 17.8**].









HIEROGLYPHICS TRAIL 101

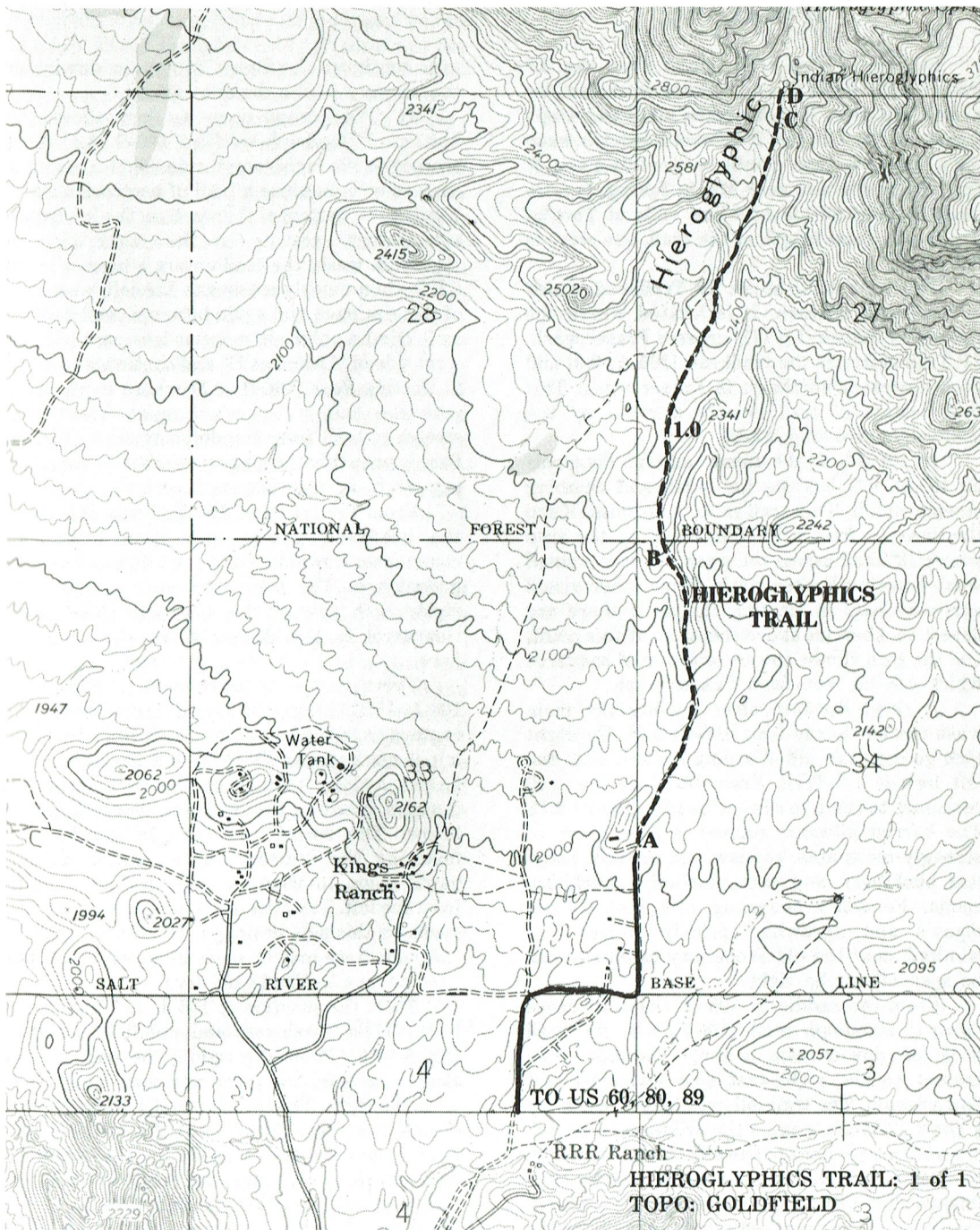
Summary: This trail begins near a residential area off of King's Ranch Road, follows an old abandoned road for a distance, then becomes a trail and ends among some low cliffs where there are Indian hieroglyphics on the rocks. Total length of the trail, one way, is 1.8 miles.

The Hieroglyphics Trail begins at Hieroglyphics Trailhead. It starts [101-A; 0.0] on the opposite/north side of the fence as a very wide path heading toward Superstition Mountain and Hieroglyphic Canyon. The trail climbs gradually uphill through an area of saguaros, triangle-leaf bur sage, creosotebush, jumping cholla, buckhorn cholla and foothill paloverde. Some ironwood trees can be seen in a fair-sized drainage off on the right. (These trees are not at all common in the Superstitions because they cannot tolerate cold weather.) As the trail continues, teddy bear chollas join the plants along the trail.

At **101-B [0.7]** the trail passes the wilderness boundary. From here the broad trail heads up a wide, long ridge. It continues uphill until it fizzles out at **101-C [a little over 1.7]**. From here there is a route which follows close to the right side of Hieroglyphic drainage.

At **101-D [a little under 1.8]** is the area where the hieroglyphics are concentrated. Most of them are situated on the left side. These pictures have been scraped or scratched into the dark desert varnish which covers the smooth rocks. A number of characters are depicted--human forms, bighorn sheep of various sizes, a centipede. A few 20th Century morons have done some etching of their own; please don't be tempted to contribute.

There may be some pools of water in the smooth rock bottom of the wash in this area. The last time we were here, they were polluted, but one pool about six feet wide and eight inches deep had an almost solid layer of backswimmers (a type of insect which swims upside down) near the bottom. They were alive but completely motionless.



JF TRAIL 106

Summary: This trail starts near the JF Ranch and follows Fraser Canyon upstream for a short distance. It then climbs a hill and drops into Randolph Canyon. It follows Randolph wash for a distance, then climbs to Tortilla Pass. It then drops down to near Mullin Spring, follows along a series of hillsides and ends at Tortilla Trailhead. Total length of the trail, one way, is 8.9 miles.

This trail starts at the JF Trailhead, which is somewhat obscure. It is located where the road to JF Ranch (FS 172) crosses Fraser wash. JF Trail starts at the trailhead [106-A; 0.0] and goes upstream/northeast in Fraser wash. This first section of trail is only a route up the gradually-narrowing wash.

At 106-B [0.3], the unmarked trail diagonals off to the left, leaving the wash and climbing steeply uphill. This trail is easy to miss. Keep the distance from FS 172 in mind. In the area where JF Trail leaves the wash, there is a small wash entering Fraser wash. Some other visual aids may help in locating the spot: there are desert hackberries above the wash at this point, and the trail climbs toward a group of saguaros which can be seen from Fraser wash.

A short distance after leaving the main wash there is a trail fork [106-C; 0.4]. The right fork goes to the old Woodbury cabin site; the left fork is JF Trail. From the fork the trail continues to climb to a broad saddle [106-D; 0.7]. The barren hillsides support a thin cover of scraggly mesquites, catclaw, snakeweed, holly-leaf buckthorn and cacti, including buckhorn cholla, Fendler's hedgehog and both Engelmann's and sprawling prickly pears. The windmill near the old Woodbury cabin site can be seen off to the right.

From the saddle at 106-D, the trail drops down to Randolph wash [106-E; 0.8]. JF Trail goes left/downstream a short distance, then crosses to the right/east side about 90 feet downstream. The trail follows along a bench for a short distance, passes the wilderness boundary and crosses back to the left side of Randolph wash [106-F; a little under 1.0]. The trail then follows above Randolph wash through a pretty area where many shrubs border the trail. As the

trail continues, La Barge Mountain dominates the scenery in the distance ahead.

JF Trail drops down to just above the bottom of Randolph wash at 106-G [1.4], then crosses to the right/north side. This crossing is easy to miss because a trail of use continues to parallel the bottom of the wash on the left/south side. After crossing to the north side of Randolph wash, the trail enters a narrow wash ("E"), then quickly crosses to the left/west side of this drainage and again becomes well defined as it climbs uphill. It more-or-less parallels the west side of "Drainage E" and continues to climb to Tortilla Pass [106-H; 3.3] where it junctions with the end of Roger's Canyon Trail. This stretch of trail from Randolph wash to Tortilla Pass is probably the longest climb to be found on any trail in the Superstitions.

From Tortilla Pass, JF Trail cuts sharply to the left/west, passes through a fence and commences downhill along the left/south side of a drainage. The trail then cuts over to the right/north side of this drainage [106-I; 3.5]. Chaparral is the dominant vegetation along here.

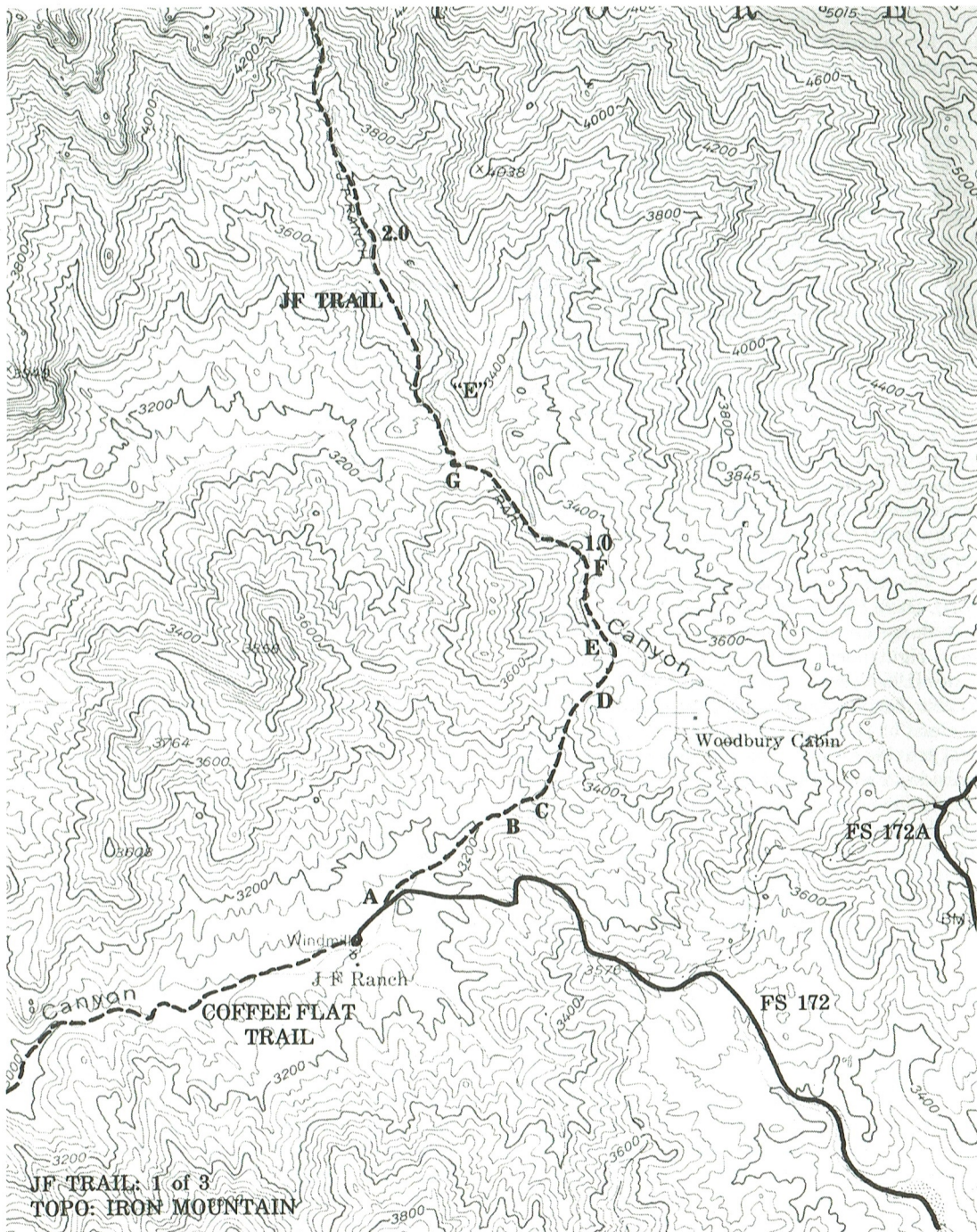
There is a trail junction on a hillside at 106-J; [3.7]. From this junction, a short side route goes to the area of Mullin Spring. This side trip is not a part of JF Trail, but the spring can be reached by taking the left fork from the junction down to the drainage some 80 yards below. The spring can then be reached by following the drainage for an additional 130 yards down to where a side drainage enters from the left. The area of the spring is about 100 yards up this side drainage. At certain times of the year there may be pools of water there, but it could just as likely be dry.

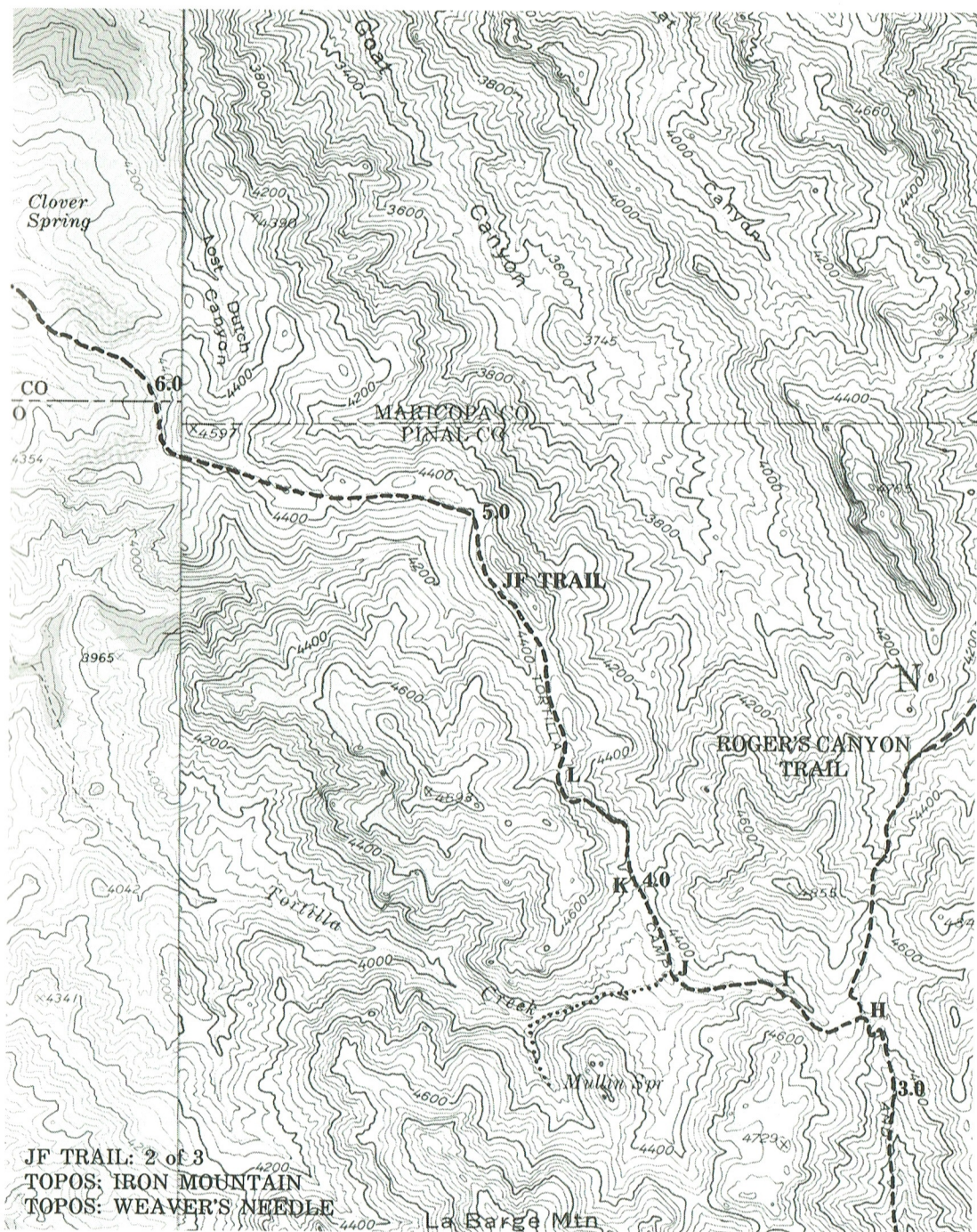
From the junction at 106-J, JF Trail heads to the right/northwest and uphill to a saddle [106-K; 4.0]. From the saddle the trail follows along a hillside, and there are some nice views off to the right. The trail gradually steepens as it climbs to a ridge [106-L; 4.4]. From the ridge, Four Peaks is visible ahead in the distance. After reaching the ridge, the trail follows a long series of hillsides, ridges and saddles. It is generally a descent from here, but there are a

few uphill stretches. Amole (shindagger) grows in a few places along the trail. Grasses are the dominant vegetation, but there are also junipers, sugar sumacs, yuccas, shrub live oaks, manzanita, birchleaf mountain mahogany, bear-grass, sotol and Arizona rosewood.

After following along the left side of a series of hillsides from 106-L, the trail swings to the right at the 5.7-mile point. It then drops down to a wash at the 6.6-mile point. Engelmann's prickly pears are abundant here. The trail crosses this wash. Numerous small geodes can be found along the trail beyond the crossing--nothing of gem quality but interesting nonetheless. After crossing the wash and climbing for a short distance, the trail descends toward Tortilla Trailhead. There are some nice views of the rugged cliffs of Lost Dutch Canyon on the right along this section. As the trail continues to descend, buildings at Tortilla Headquarters come into view. Tortilla Mountain is the peak off to the left of the buildings. It has a rounded knob on top.

The trail comes down to a road at **106-M** [8.7]. Here *Hoolie Bacon Trail 111 goes to the left along the road. From this junction, JF Trail goes right/north along the road to a gate and fence [**106-N**; 8.9]. This is the end of JF Trail and is also Tortilla Trailhead. (Just before reaching the end of JF Trail, a short hike off to the right will provide a view of the old Miller mines on the hillside.) From the gate at trail's end, the road heads downhill to Tortilla Headquarters and on out to State 88.





NEEDLE CANYON TRAIL 234

Summary: Needle Canyon Trail starts at a junction with Bluff Spring Trail, climbs to Bluff Saddle, descends along the east side of Weaver's Needle, climbs to Terrapin Pass, then descends into Needle Canyon before ending at a junction with Dutchman's Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 2.9 miles.

Needle Canyon Trail is reached from Peralta Trailhead. The start of the trail is reached by taking Dutchman's Trail 104 northeast for about 90 yards from Peralta Trailhead. Bluff Spring Trail 235 takes off to the left here and heads north for 2.3 miles to a junction where Needle Canyon Trail starts [234-A; 0.0]. (For additional information on this point, see "Bluff Spring Trail 235.")

From the beginning of the trail south of Bluff Spring Mountain, tailings in the vicinity of Williams Camp can be seen to the north. Bluff Spring Trail continues ahead/north from 234-A; Needle Canyon Trail crosses a wash to the left and begins to climb in a northwesterly direction toward Bluff Saddle. The hillsides near the beginning are rather dry and sparsely covered with sotol, snakeweed, shrub live oak, jumping cholla, Engelmann's prickly pear, a few agaves, saguaros and mesquites. Attractive "spider-worts" grow among the rocks along the first stretch of trail to the saddle. Spineless hopsage is very common in places along the trail, and resurrection plants grow in rocky crevices. After rains, these seemingly dead, shriveled plants revive and become green.

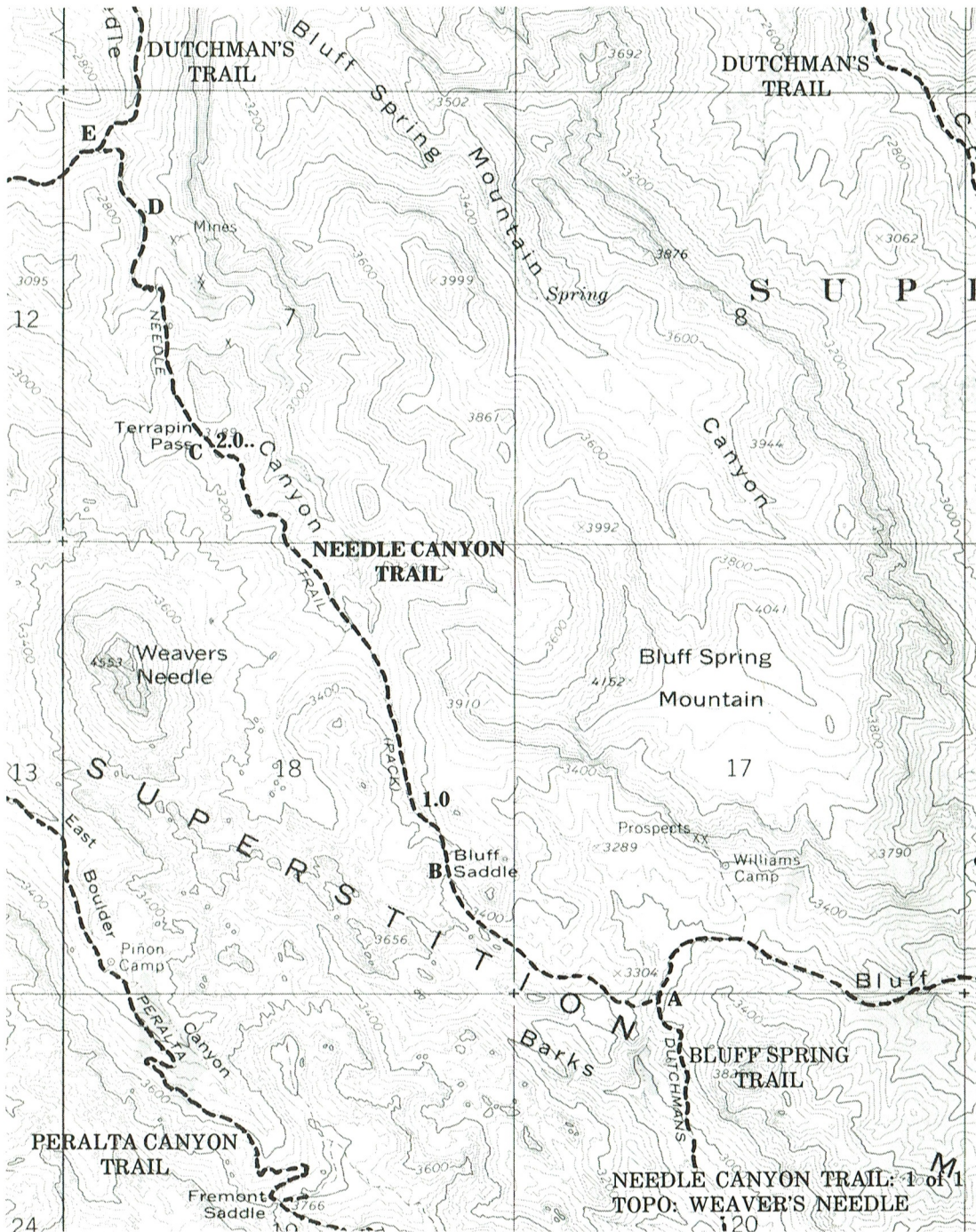
The trail climbs to Bluff Saddle [234-B; 0.7] where rocky crags stand like sentinels on both sides. We once watched a red-tailed hawk hunting over these crags against a backdrop of storm-driven clouds.

From Bluff Saddle the trail descends toward the east side of Weaver's Needle. Agaves are more common along parts of this trail than in most other places in the Superstitions. The trail tends to follow a dry drainage. As it passes close to Weaver's Needle, there are some nice thickets of shrub live oak thriving among the many dead snags of fire-killed sugar sumac.

The trail descends a little further, then

climbs steeply to Terrapin Pass [234-C; 2.0]. From the pass, Needle Canyon and Bluff Spring Mountain are off to the right/east. Black Top Mesa, with its yellowish-tan bluffs and dark cap, is ahead/northwest. Malpais Mountain is to the right of Black Top Mesa; Black Top Pass is below Black Top Mesa toward the left side. The squarish, yellow-tan formation to the left of Black Top Mesa is Palomino Mountain, and Superstition Mountain is far to the left.

From Terrapin Pass the trail descends steeply, and loose gravel and stones make the footing somewhat precarious in places. The trail reaches the bottom of Needle Canyon at 234-D [2.6]. There is an unmaintained trail which goes up Needle Canyon from this area, and this junction could be a problem for hikers coming from the other direction on this trail. Needle Canyon Trail is bordered by green thickets of shrubs and brush for a short distance before it swings up around a hillside and ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail [234-E; 2.9]. From this junction, Dutchman's Trail goes left/west and climbs uphill to Black Top Pass; it also goes to the right/northeast to Needle Canyon, then proceeds north to a junction with the end of Bull Pass Trail 129.



NEEDLE CANYON TRAIL: 1 of 1
 TOPO: WEAVER'S NEEDLE

PERALTA CANYON TRAIL 102

Summary: This trail climbs from the trailhead to Fremont Saddle, then drops into East Boulder drainage. It then passes to the west of Weaver's Needle before climbing again. It eventually drops into East Boulder Canyon where it ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 6.3 miles.

The trail starts from Peralta Trailhead [102-A; 0.0]. It leaves the far/north end of the parking area. This is a popular area, particularly on weekends when you can expect to see countless numbers of boy scouts, church groups, picnickers; mini-buses, micro-buses, school buses, pick-up trucks, horse trailers; bucking mules, packhorses and--on Saturday mornings--pandemonium.

The first part of the trail gives the impression that hikers travel six abreast, but the width gradually decreases. Unless the year has been unusually dry, vegetation along the drainage is quite lush and varied. Mesquite, jojoba, brittlebush, teddy bear cholla, foothill paloverde, canyon ragweed, spineless hopsage, shrub live oak and desert hackberry grow beside the trail and in the wash. The rugged Dacite Cliffs form part of the canyon wall on the left.

From the trailhead, the first part of the route stays fairly close to the wash, crossing it several times as it gradually climbs. Sugar sumac, a small to medium-sized tree with leathery green leaves, is common in the drainage. The canyon is usually dry except after rains. (The red-spotted toad can sometimes be found along the trail at night during warm, damp weather.) The canyon bottom has been the target of many large boulders that have toppled from above, and numerous canyon wrens bounce among the rocks. Their calls (a series of descending notes) are a familiar sound in many desert canyons. On a spring morning, many other species of birds can be heard singing along the trail, and white-throated swifts fly overhead in spring and summer.

The trail passes the wilderness boundary at 102-B [0.9]. At about 1.4 miles, Geronimo Cave can be seen in the high, yellow-tan cliffs above

on the right. The "cave" (actually a large overhang) can be reached from Fremont Saddle via *Cave Trail.

The yellow-green patina on many of the boulders is due to the presence of lichens. These unusual plants are a combination of a fungus and an alga, and a number of species are commonly found in the Superstitions. Botanists use not only such characteristics as color and growth pattern to identify the different species of lichens but also the manner in which they react with various chemical reagents.

Early morning is the best time for photography in this area. Not only are the nearby cliffs partly in shadow, but from the 1-mile point of the trail, there are some exceptional views looking back down the canyon. Row upon row of backlit ridges and hills provide fine scenery for the photographer.

At 102-C [about 1.8] the trail leaves the drainage bottom (which is difficult to discern here because the wash has become very shallow) and switchbacks uphill. Shortcut trails make the main trail difficult to follow in places, but try to stay on the main trail. Off to the left of the switchbacks, the hillside is studded with hundreds of upright rock formations which look like Kon-Tikis.

The trail tops out at Fremont Saddle [102-D; 2.3], and Weaver's Needle looms directly ahead. *Cave Trail 233 takes off on the right. The trail was vague in several places when we hiked it, and it is being reworked.

From Fremont Saddle, Peralta Canyon Trail drops into East Boulder drainage, passing through the site of an old burn. Skunkbush sumac and Arizona rosewood are among the interesting shrubs growing in the area. A new growth of sugar sumac is coming up at the bases of burned trees. The trail descends via one particularly long switchback, then down along a hillside.

At 102-E [3.3] the trail skirts the edge of Pinyon Camp. There is a copse of trees here where several large single-leaf pinyons grow among sugar sumacs, barberry, mountain mahogany and yucca. The sound of the wind in these little pines seems out of place in the dry

landscape.

From the Pinyon Camp area, the trail continues gradually downhill, keeping to the left/west side of East Boulder drainage. The trail pulls even with Weaver's Needle at 3.7 miles. (Note that there are two pinnacles comprising the Needle when viewed from here.) At 4.3 miles there is a small clearing on the right and a prospector's pit on the left.

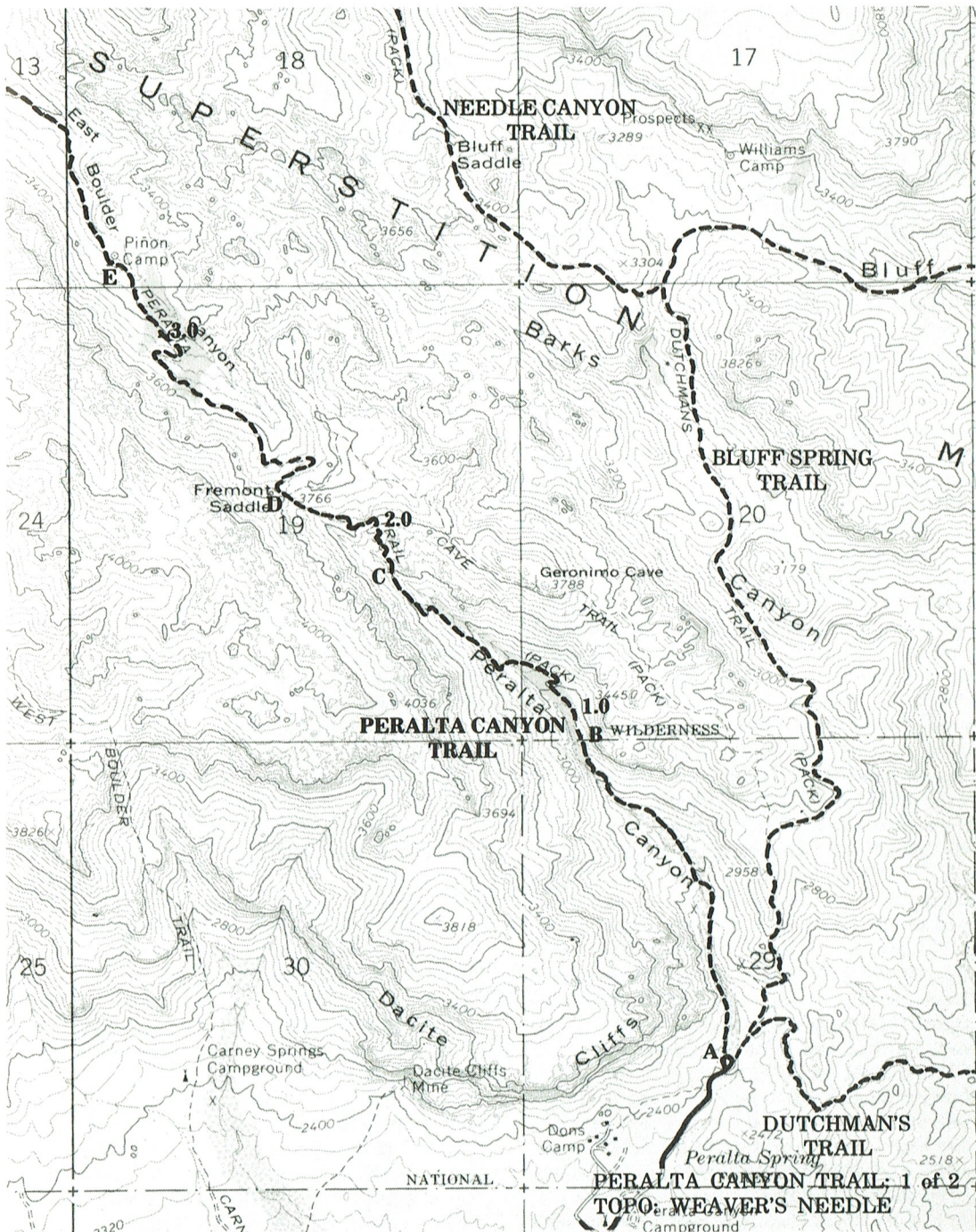
As the trail proceeds, it gradually pulls away from the drainage bottom and climbs along a hillside. It swings up to the left/west of "Knob 3113" on the topo map [102-F; 4.9], then heads downhill. From the 5.2-mile point, Black Mesa Trail can be seen as a very thin line coming down off Black Mesa in the distance ahead. (To the novice hiker, the Superstition trail system may seem to be a bewildering maze, but after extensive hiking, all the trails and landmarks begin to fit together.)

The trail continues downhill to a sort of saddle [102-G; 5.6]. From here, a single long switchback is visible across the canyon to the right where Dutchman's Trail climbs out of East Boulder drainage to Black Top Pass. The *Old Quarter Circle U Trail junctions with Peralta Canyon Trail at this saddle, and stretches of this little-used trail can be seen below on the left as Peralta Canyon Trail continues downhill.

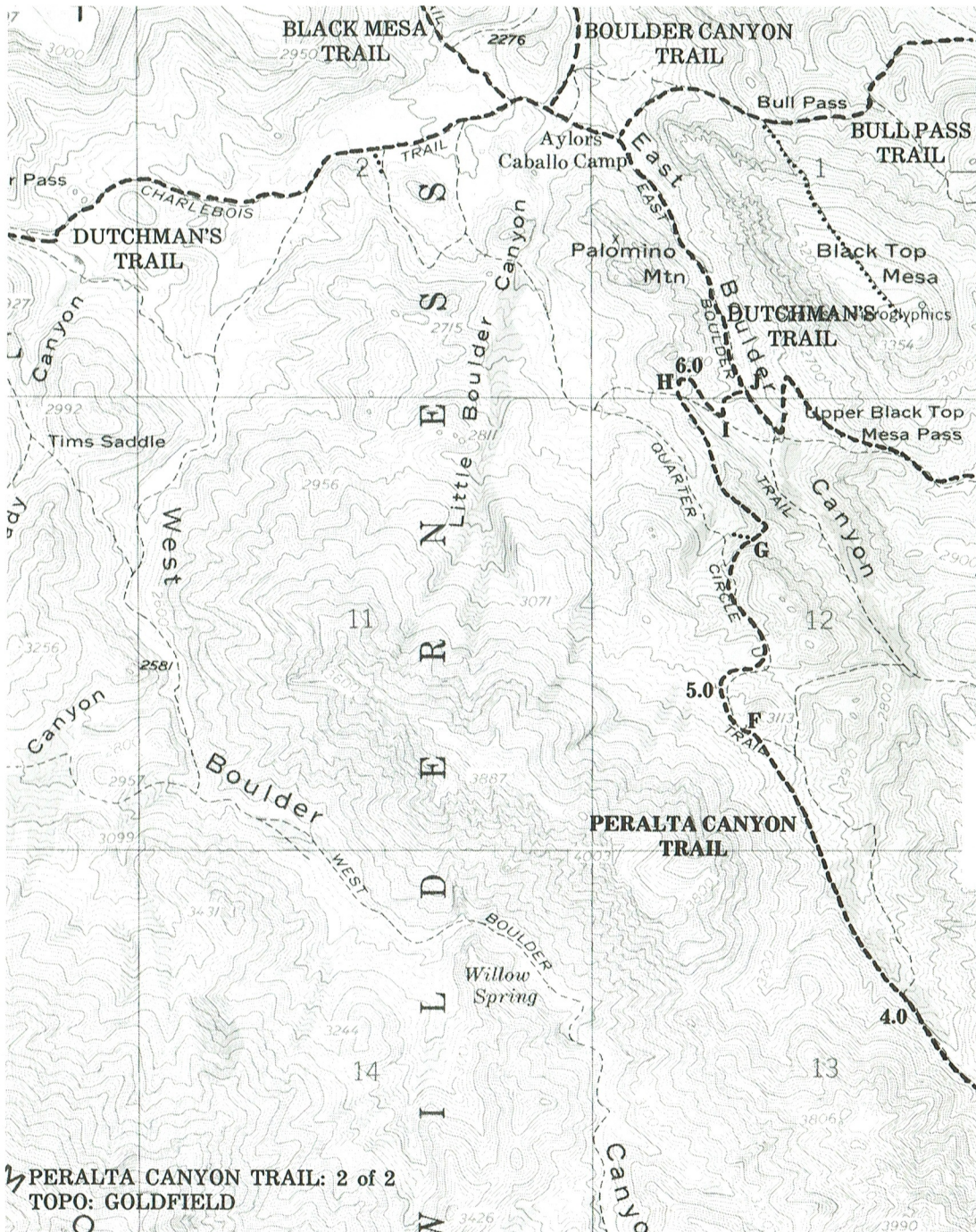
At 102-H [5.9], just before Peralta Canyon Trail begins to switchback down into East Boulder Canyon, there is an old *trail going diagonally left uphill. It ties into part of Old Quarter Circle U Trail and can provide a shortcut to First Water for individuals familiar with the route.

Peralta Canyon Trail continues downhill, coming to a trail fork [102-I; 6.1]. The left fork is Peralta Canyon Trail, and it goes 0.1 mile to a junction [102-J; 6.2] with Dutchman's Trail 104. This is the end of Peralta Canyon Trail.

From the junction at 102-J, Dutchman's Trail goes left/northwest down East Boulder drainage to the Boulder Basin area. To the right, Dutchman's Trail crosses East Boulder wash a short distance upstream, then climbs via a long switchback to Black Top Pass.



PERALTA CANYON TRAIL: 1 of 2
TOPO: WEAVER'S NEEDLE



PERALTA CANYON TRAIL: 2 of 2
TOPO: GOLDFIELD

REEVIS GAP TRAIL 117

Summary: This trail starts at Upper Horrell Place, which is privately owned, then proceeds along Campaign Creek in a south-westerly direction. After leaving Campaign Creek, it eventually follows a series of hillsides to Reevis Gap. From the gap, the trail drops down to Pine Creek, then climbs to a pass from which it proceeds down along a hillside and ends where it junctions with Reeves Ranch Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 6.8 miles.

The trail starts [117-A; 0.0] at the Upper Horrell Place Trailhead. It passes just to the right of a tin shed near the ranch house. The first section is along what is still a road, but it soon becomes a trail and crosses to the right side of Campaign Creek in a little over 100 yards. Sycamores, junipers, Arizona walnuts, seepwillows and Fremont cottonwoods grow here. The trail soon crosses back to the left side of the creek and passes the wilderness boundary at 0.3 mile.

As the trail continues, it crosses Campaign Creek several times. There is usually some water along here, and leopard frogs plop into the water and disappear beneath flotillas of watercress in the springtime. From just under 0.4 mile, the trail is on the left/south side of the creek, and there are a number of mushy spots caused by a series of springs. Growing in the partial shade provided by sycamores and walnuts are columbine, poison ivy, wild berries and canyon grape. The small black and white birds that are often seen perched along the creek are black phoebes.

The trail continues to follow the left side of Campaign Creek to a fork in the drainage [117-B; 0.5]. There appears to be a trail heading up the righthand drainage here, but Reevis Gap Trail stays with the left drainage. The trail continues to follow the left fork, passing a pole corral at 0.6 mile. At 117-C [0.7] the trail crosses to the right side of the creek to a trail junction just above the bank. *KRN Trail 256 comes down along the creek from the south and ends here; Reevis Gap Trail is the right-hand fork at the junction. It leaves the canyon, climbing to an obvious ridge [117-D; 0.8] from which there is an interesting view of Two Bar Mountain with

its white "bars" and rugged slopes. At the ridge there is an old trail going down the far side, but Reevis Gap Trail turns directly left and heads uphill along the spine of the ridge to the 0.9-mile point where it turns right/west and follows along a hillside. Manzanita, single-leaf pinyon, Utah juniper and shrub live oak grow on the dry, exposed hillside. There is a canyon off on the right. As the trail continues, it drops off the hillside and crosses a wash [117-E; 1.4] which is usually dry.

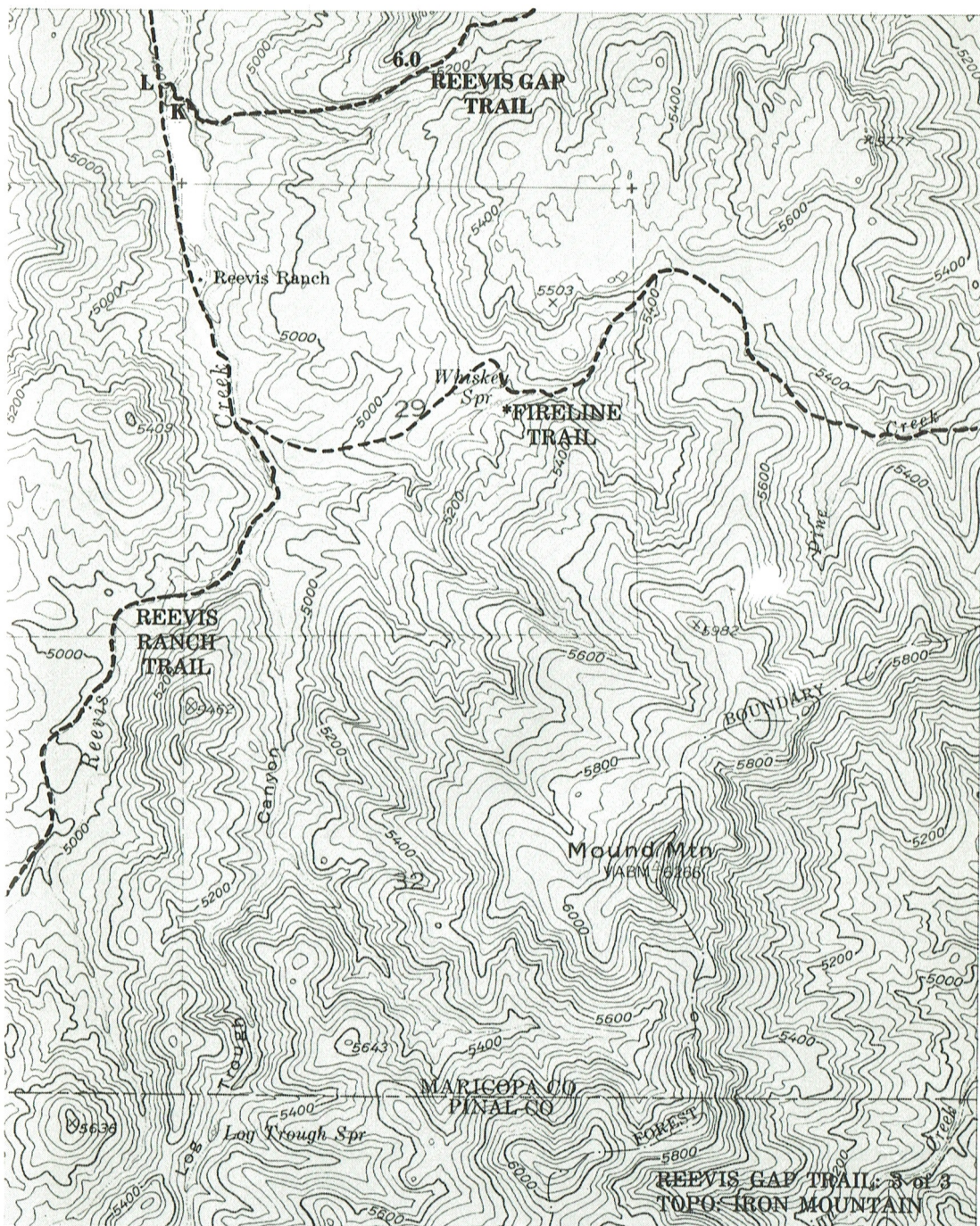
From the wash, the trail climbs very steeply, more or less paralleling the wash but staying some distance to the right/north of it. At 1.7 miles the trail pauses in its very steep climb and passes through an area strewn with rocks--possibly an old Indian ruin, judging by the uniform deployment of the rocks. The route then swings left and follows along the open hillside to Reevis Gap [117-F; 3.1]. Portions of the trail up to the gap are again fairly steep.

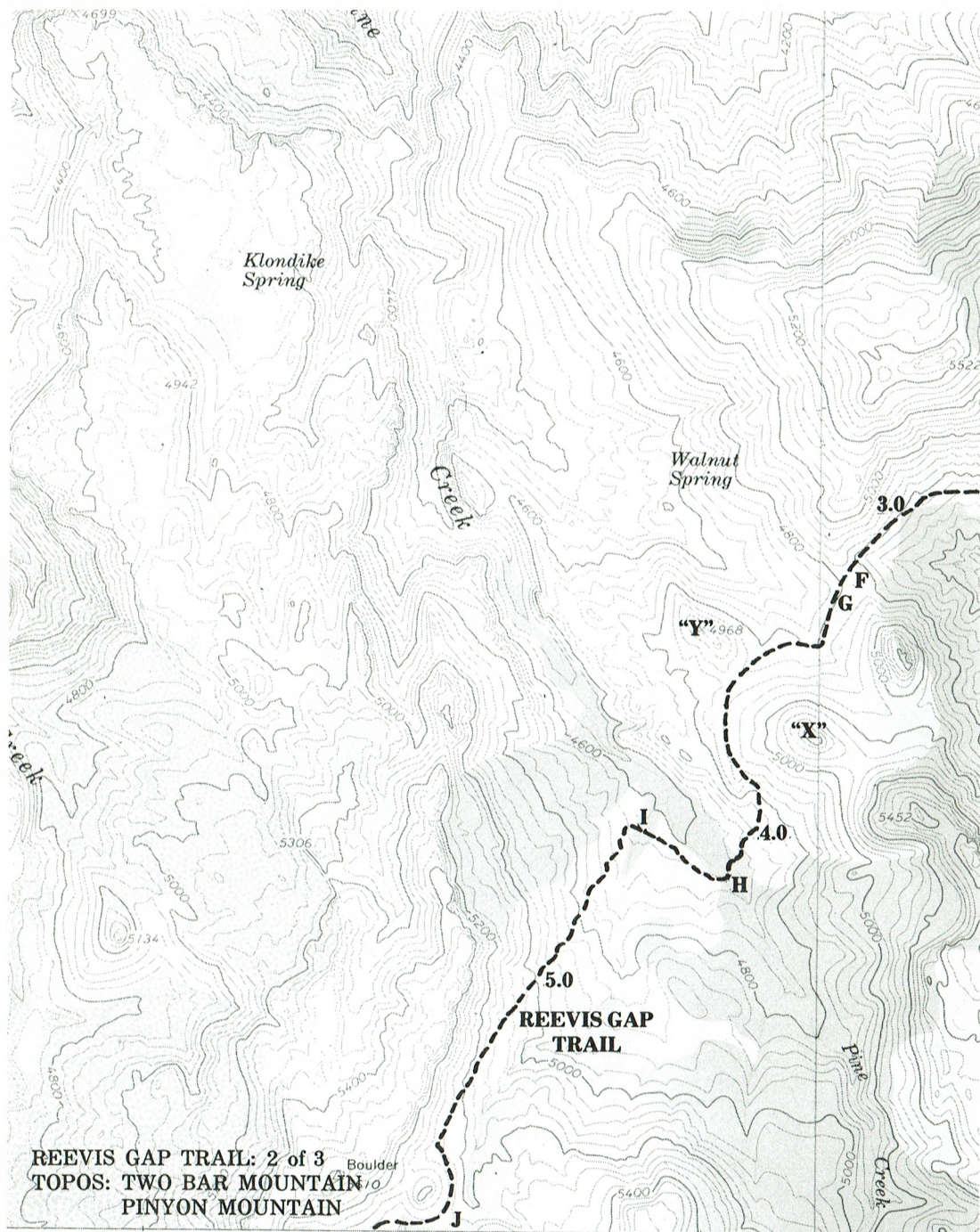
From the broad saddle at Reevis Gap, the trail may be somewhat obscured by grasses as it veers downhill to the left/southwest to a junction [117-G; 3.2]. *Two Bar Ridge Trail 119 heads off to the right/north here. The Four Peaks formation in the Mazatzals is visible far to the north. Reevis Gap Trail continues to the left/southwest from the junction to a small drainage, then climbs to a broad saddle between "Hill X" and "Hill Y" at 3.6 miles. It then swings left, partially rounding "Hill X" before dropping downhill to Pine Creek [117-H; 4.1]. Ponderosa pines, sycamores, oaks and shrubs grow among huge, round boulders along Pine Creek. The creek may be dry.

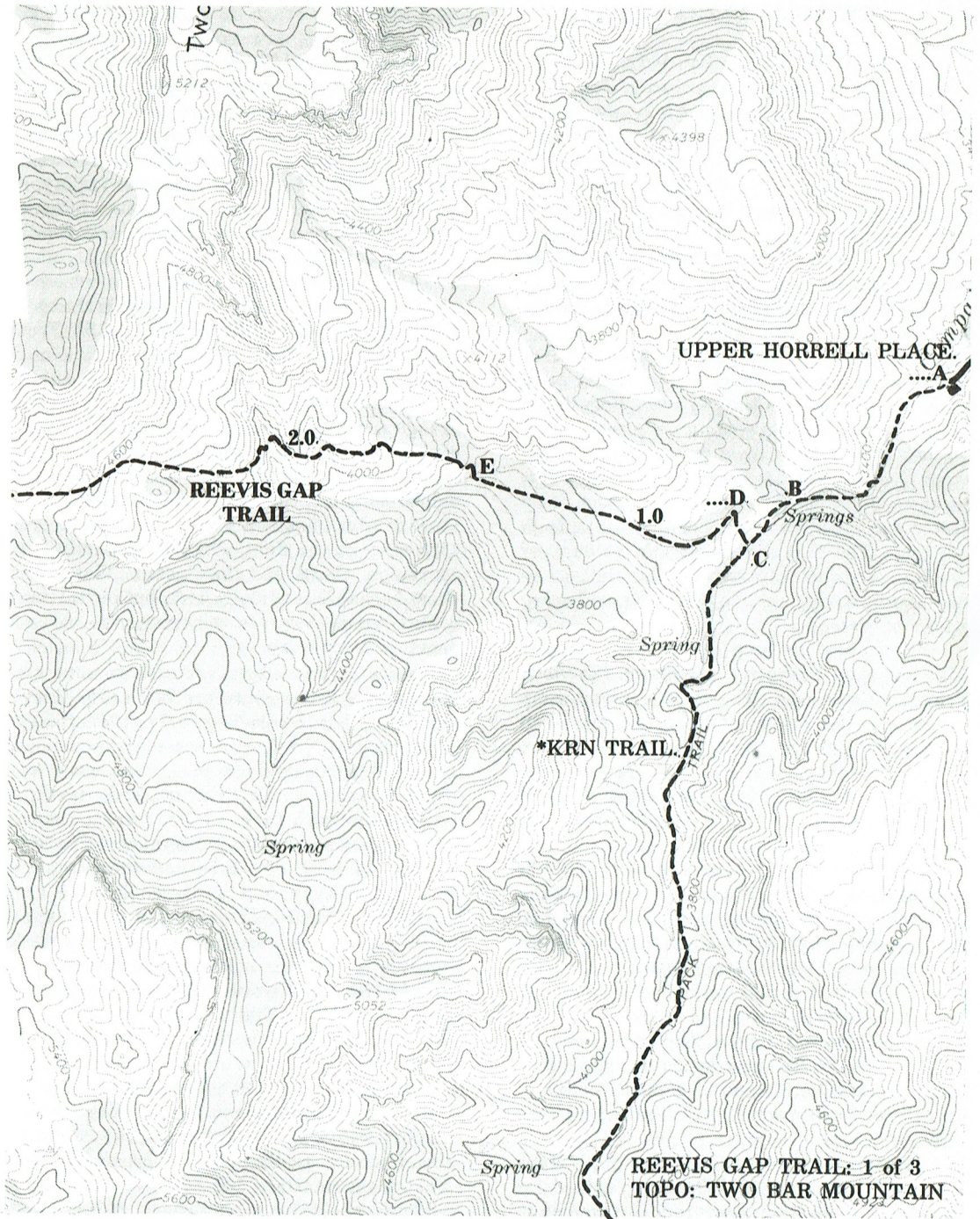
After leaving the creek, the trail trends downstream, crossing a relatively level area, then crossing another wash [117-I; 4.3]. It then climbs steadily uphill, diagonalling left along the side of Boulder Mountain to a broad saddle [117-J; 5.6]. It swings to the right/west from the saddle and heads downhill. The high mountain visible in the distance is White Mountain. The old ranch house at Reevis Headquarters can be seen in the valley ahead. The trail crosses Reevis Creek [117-K; 6.7] in an area where there is often running water beneath the sycamores.

From the creek crossing at 117-K to the junction with Reeves Ranch Trail, there is no

defined trail. Immediately after crossing the creek, the route turns to the right/north and goes downstream between the creek on the right and a fence on the left. After about 90 yards, it turns left/west, away from the creek, follows a barbed-wire fence across the pasture and ends at a junction with Reeves Ranch Trail 109 [117-L; 6.8]. From this junction, Reeves Ranch Trail goes left/south to the ranch house (Reeves Headquarters). This same trail goes right/north from the junction to Reeves Ranch Trailhead.







REEVIS RANCH TRAIL 109

Summary: The Reeves Ranch Trail is long, and parts of it are rather arduous. The first section follows an old road which is now closed to motor vehicles. It passes Castle Dome Mountain, Windy Pass and Plow Saddle on its way to the old Reeves Ranch headquarters. From the ranch, it passes through the Iron Burn area, then climbs to a saddle before switching down past Reeves' Grave. It then drops down to Roger's Canyon and follows this drainage to Roger's Trough Trailhead. Total length of the trail, one way, is 16.4 miles.

The trail starts [109-A; 0.0] at Reeves Ranch Trailhead at a point where the road has been blocked off. It follows the old road. Vegetation has begun to soften its contours in places, but it is still a road for the most part. Yucca, jojoba, shrub live oak, catclaw, sugar sumac, barberry, snakeweed, birchleaf mountain mahogany, fairy duster and sotol are typical of the plant life in the area. There is a considerable amount of climbing involved along parts of this trail, so be sure to adjust your pace to the grade, and carry plenty of water.

From the first mile of the trail, Apache Lake and Four Peaks are included in the view. Near the 2-mile point, the state highway camp can be seen far below; and the big, mesa-like bluff to the right/north of the camp is Bronco Butte. The area is a maze of canyons and ravines, and the hills are covered with chaparral. Parts of the trail-road are often visible far ahead.

The trail passes through a fence at 109-B [a little under 4.0]. There is a corral here. Once the trail is beyond the corral, there are some fine panoramic views off to the left as the trail climbs along the side of Castle Dome Mountain. Several of the trees and shrubs to look for along this stretch include Palmer's oak, narrowleaf hop-tree and single-leaf pinyon. The trail reaches a saddle at 109-C [5.4] and heads downhill. Just below the saddle, a stand of pines is visible in Fish Creek Canyon which drains downhill to the right.

From the saddle at 109-C, the trail drops down to Windy Pass [109-D], aptly named for the wind that often sings over it. The scar of an

old road swings off to the right on the hillside here, and there are some nice patches of beargrass on the hillside to the left. The trail continues downhill from the pass, the section below providing an interesting contrast--a hillside on the left which is relatively barren except for grasses and a hillside on the right which is wooded with an unusual variety of shrubs and trees. There are alligator junipers and some large oaks, manzanitas and South-western chokecherries.

The trail continues downhill to where it crosses a drainage [109-E; 6.3], then climbs up to a corral and loading chute [109-F; 6.5]. From here the trail climbs to 109-G [7.1]. This point is apparently Plow Saddle.

From 109-G the trail, which is still a road, swings downhill. Parts of Frog Tank Trail are visible below on the right from this section of Reeves Ranch Trail. Willow Creek drainage is below/south of Frog Tank Trail. At 109-H [7.7] there is a trail junction where *Frog Tank Trail 112 enters on the right. The Reeves Ranch Trail continues ahead at this point. Watch for short-horned lizards along here, but please don't collect them--they are sensitive and do not survive in captivity.

As the trail continues, there are some nice stands of Arizona sycamore bordering Reeves Creek which is the drainage off to the left/east. This creek often has at least some running water. A few ponderosa pines soon come into the landscape. As the trail proceeds south, it begins to follow a barbed-wire fence, to the left of which are some lush, grassy fields. The little mounds of fresh dirt here and there are the work of valley pocket gophers, and the area bustles with birdlife in the spring. A few apple trees grow in the cleared, grassy area, a prelude to a bigger orchard somewhat to the south.

At 109-I [a little over 9.0] there is a junction where Reeves Gap Trail 117 enters and ends on the left/east side of the Trail. While Reeves Gap Trail may not be very obvious at this point, it becomes a regular trail a short distance east of the creek and slightly upstream. From the trail junction at 109-I, Reeves Ranch Trail continues ahead/south, passing an impressive apple orchard that starts at 109-J [9.1]. There is some old farm machinery strewn about, and at 109-K

[9.4] the trail passes just to the right of the old Reeves ranch house (Reevis Headquarters).

The ranch house was built over a period of years, and the types of construction and materials vary. The architecture is "dogtrot" style with a metal roof over walls of adobe and sandstone. Unfortunately the building is showing signs of abuse. There is an old six-burner wood stove in the kitchen--so coveted by at least one individual that it was snatched away by helicopter, became the topic of several newspaper articles and was subsequently restored to the ranch house.

The trail continues south past the ranch house, then traverses another apple orchard and heads gradually through an open, grassy area bordered by woods on either side. At **109-L [a little over 9.7]** the trail drops down beside Reeves Creek. A very short distance upstream, *Fireline Trail 118 starts [**109-M**], heading uphill in a southeasterly direction. The start of this trail may be somewhat vague, but it soon becomes an obvious route. Reeves Ranch Trail continues south, more or less following the creek upstream. Frogs frequent the muddy margins of the creek, and mats of watercress float in the stream. Some of the trees shading the drainage are festooned with canyon grape. The trail crosses the creek several times as it continues. Small willows grow near the water, and ponderosa pines are common. There are even a few Arizona cypresses. This area offers an interesting contrast to the west end of the Superstitions. In fact, with pine needles and cones strewn along the trail, it doesn't seem like the Superstitions at all.

At 10.3 miles the trail leaves the creek bottom for a distance on the right/west side and passes through a ponderosa pine forest. There are a few oaks and alligator junipers mingling with the pines, and at 10.7 miles there is a huge alligator juniper next to the trail. Clumpy grass grows beneath the pines.

Conditions become drier as the trail approaches the Iron Burn area. In June, 1966, a fire spread by heavy winds burned some 10,500 acres here and in the area of Iron Mountain. A second fire on Buckhorn Ridge covered some 4,500 acres at about the same time. Approximately a thousand men fought to control these

lightning-caused fires. Naturally-caused fires are now allowed to burn in some areas, clearing out undergrowth and opening the way for a natural succession of plants and animals. Many factors, such as the types of vegetation, soil, terrain and weather, are involved in the decision to fight a fire or allow it to burn.

Numerous dead snags still stand in the burn, and there are some partially-blackened ponderosas which are still alive. Bunches of grass are abundant in the burn area which has a rather stark beauty of its own. Natural succession is taking place, and a new forest will eventually replace the old.

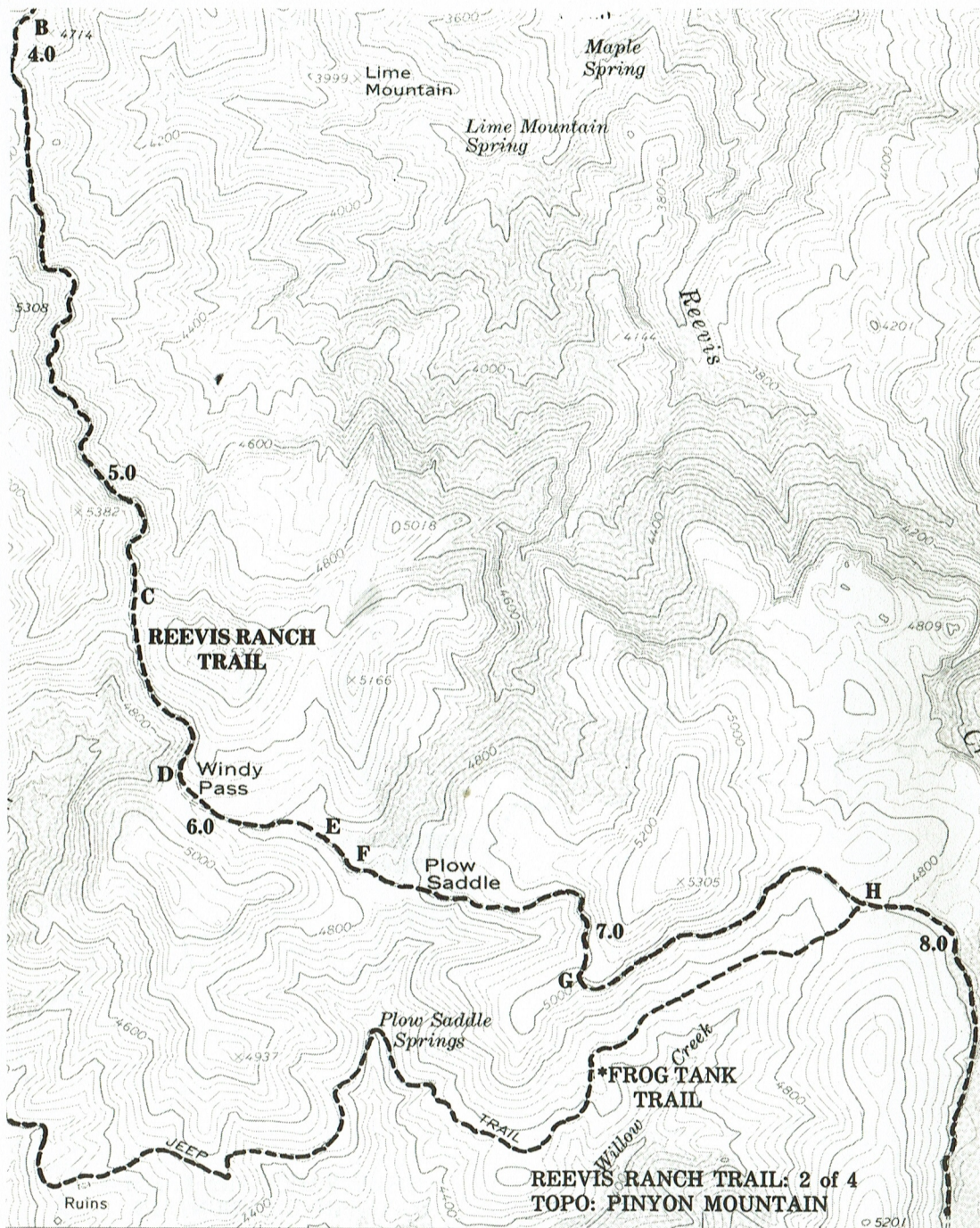
The trail, after pulling away from the creek at the 10.3-mile point, again swings over and goes upstream along the creek. At **109-N [11.9]** Honeysuckle Spring is a short distance up a side drainage on the right/west. White Mountain is also off on the right. The trail continues to climb, occasionally crossing from one side of the drainage to the other. It gradually leaves the burn area behind, and oaks and alligator junipers become common again. The trail reaches a broad saddle at **109-O [12.8]**. Iron Mountain (elevation 6,056) is the large, round-shaped mountain south of the saddle.

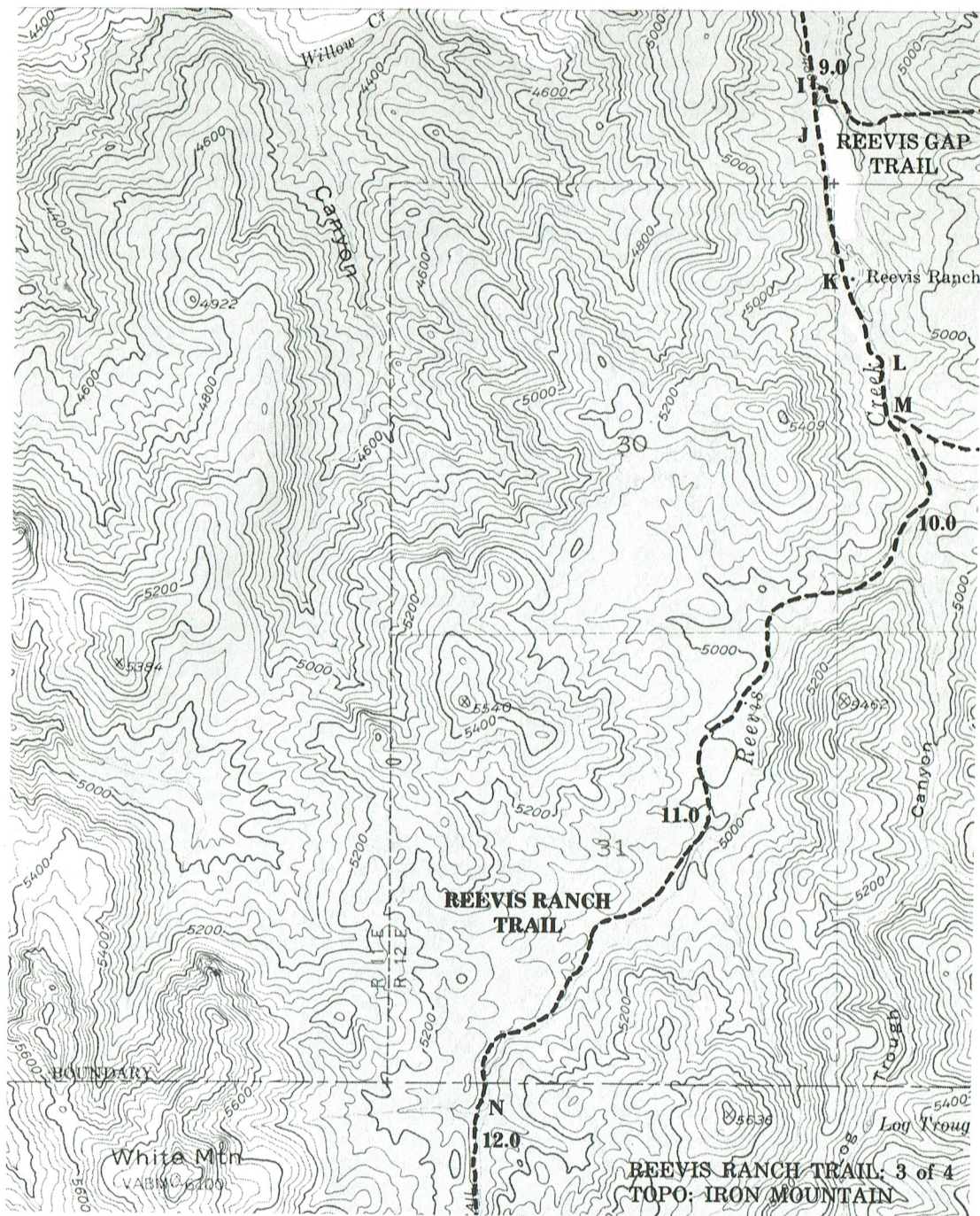
From the saddle at 109-O, the trail swings to the right and makes a long, tortuous descent. The hillsides along here are covered with a variety of shrubs. There is a series of switchbacks before the trail reaches the drainage bottom. Once it stops its steep descent at the edge of the wash, it turns right and heads less steeply downhill, more or less parallel to the wash. About 40 yards beyond the end of the steep descent, the trail passes an easily-missed side trail going to the right to Reeves' Grave [**109-P; 14.1**]. The body of this early settler was apparently found here, though the cause of his death remains unknown.

The trail continues to follow the wash downstream. It drops into and out of the wash several times; and it leaves the wash for the last time at a little under 14.7 miles. Just before Reeves Ranch Trail starts to swing left toward Roger's Trough, there is a junction [**109-Q; a little over 14.7**]. Roger's Canyon Trail 110 starts here as described in this book. From this junction, Reeves Ranch Trail swings left and

proceeds south as it follows above Roger's Creek wash. This is a pretty canyon in which there may be an occasional pool of water among the sycamores, netleaf hackberries and walnuts. As it heads for Roger's Trough Trailhead, the trail winds in and out of the wash in Roger's Canyon a number of times. As it nears Roger's Trough Trailhead, it passes a junction **[109-R; 16.2]** with *Spring Creek Loop Trail 212. This junction may not be easy to spot. The end of Reeves Ranch Trail is at the parking area **[109-S; 16.4]** at Roger's Trough Trailhead. (This is also the end of FS 172A.)







ROGER'S CANYON TRAIL 110

Summary: Roger's Canyon Trail, which is partly a route, begins at a junction with the Reeves Ranch Trail, then goes up Roger's Canyon to some interesting cliff dwellings which are undoubtedly the highlight of this hike. From the cliff dwellings, the trail-route continues past a junction with Frog Tank Trail before climbing to Tortilla Pass where it ends at a junction with JF Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 4.7 miles.

The trail is reached from the Roger's Trough Trailhead. It actually starts [110-A; 0.0] at a junction along Reeves Ranch Trail 109 about 1.6 miles north of Roger's Trough Trailhead. This junction is a short distance east of where the Reeves Ranch Trail swings to the east after leaving Roger's Canyon and heads toward Reeves' grave site. For those hikers coming from Reeves Ranch, the start of Roger's Canyon Trail is about 0.6 mile downstream from Reeves' grave site.

After leaving Reeves Ranch Trail at 110-A, Roger's Canyon Trail soon drops down to a wash and proceeds to Roger's Creek [110-B; a little over 100 yards]. The first part of the "trail" through Roger's Canyon is more or less a route, although there are occasional trails of use on either side of the wash. For this reason we have shown the route going directly up the wash, but at least part of this first section does involve some trail which varies from poor to good.

The bottom of Roger's Canyon is overlaid with rounded rocks and bordered by sycamores and oaks. Canyon grape grows in some of the trees. Velvet ash, alligator juniper, Southwestern chokecherry and manzanita also grow here. Seepwillows grow in the drainage where there may be some nice pools of water. As the trail continues, it passes the towering, rugged cliffs of White Mountain off to the right.

At 1.1 miles there is a wide, sandy bench on the left side of the wash which is partially shaded by oaks. At 1.2 miles the trail is on the right side of the wash and is fairly well defined. There is an unusually large alligator juniper along this stretch, and there is a barbed-wire corral a short distance further up the wash at a little over 1.2 miles. The trail tends to be in

partial shade as it follows the right bench. The canyon bottom becomes more rugged in places, and there are huge boulders here and there. The trail continues to go upstream. Oak leaves may litter the trail in places. Before reaching 2.5 miles, the trail crosses the wash several times. At 110-C [2.5] the trail is on the left side of the wash directly opposite the cliff dwellings, and a short trail cuts across to the ruins. These are perhaps 700 years old and very fragile--do not touch them or dig around them. The site is protected by the Antiquities Act and, hopefully, by the common sense of visitors. The ruins are in recesses in the cliffs. Sitting quietly outside, it is interesting to speculate on what life must have been like for the occupants. How far did they have to travel for food? Water was probably where it is today--in the wash just below the ruins. What foods were they able to kill or collect? Studies in certain areas have shown that part of their diet consisted of such items as grasshoppers. How many times must one of them have sat here thinking, just as you are now? Why did they leave? While it is easy to see why the Indians selected this spot, their abandonment of hundreds of dwellings similar to this throughout large areas of the Southwest is a mystery which really hasn't been solved. Everything from disease and drought to warfare with invading groups has been considered and studied to some degree.

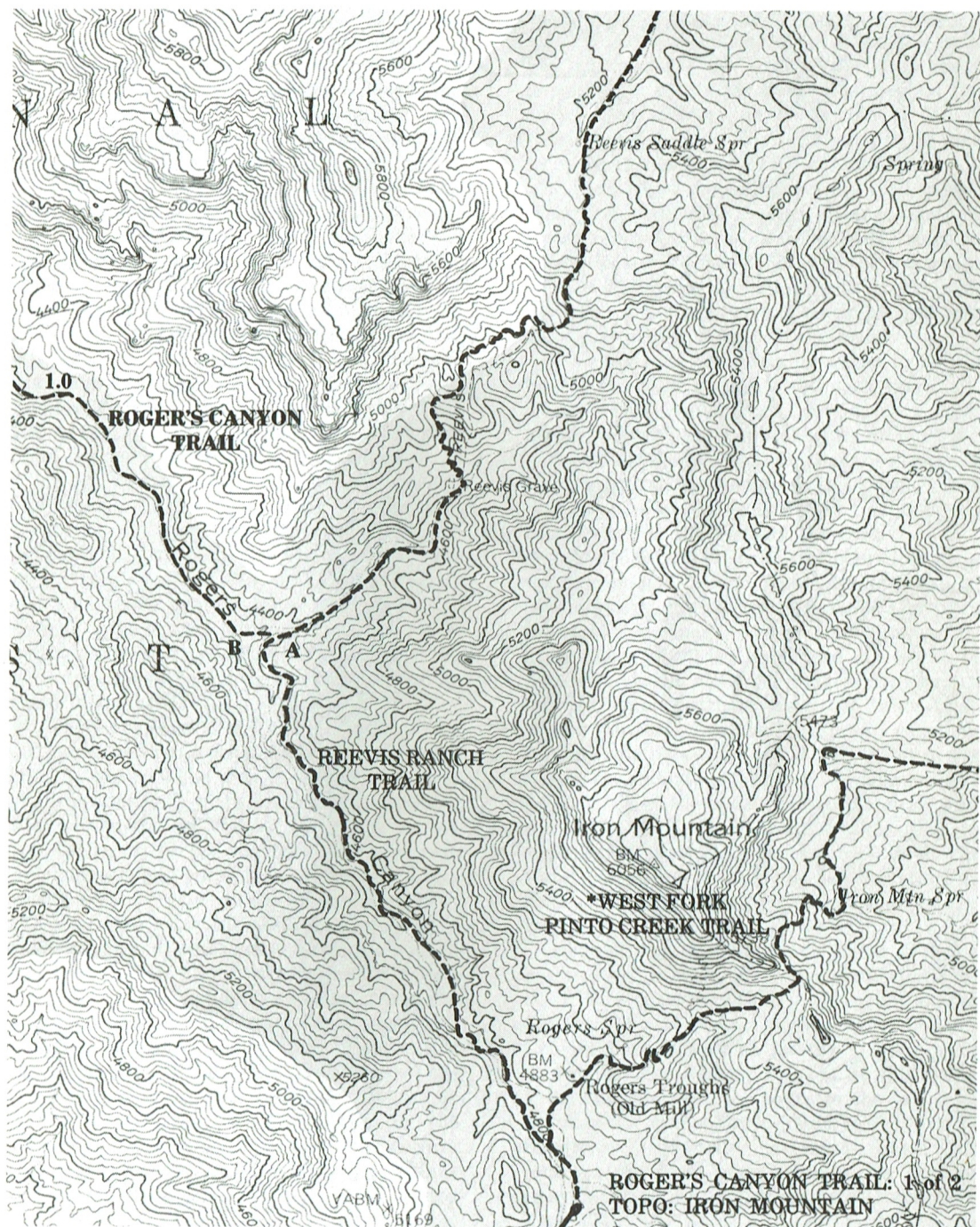
The dwellings and storerooms are constructed of mud and rock. There are other cliff dwellings in the Superstitions, but this is one of the most often visited. Please--leave it as it is so that others may also enjoy it.

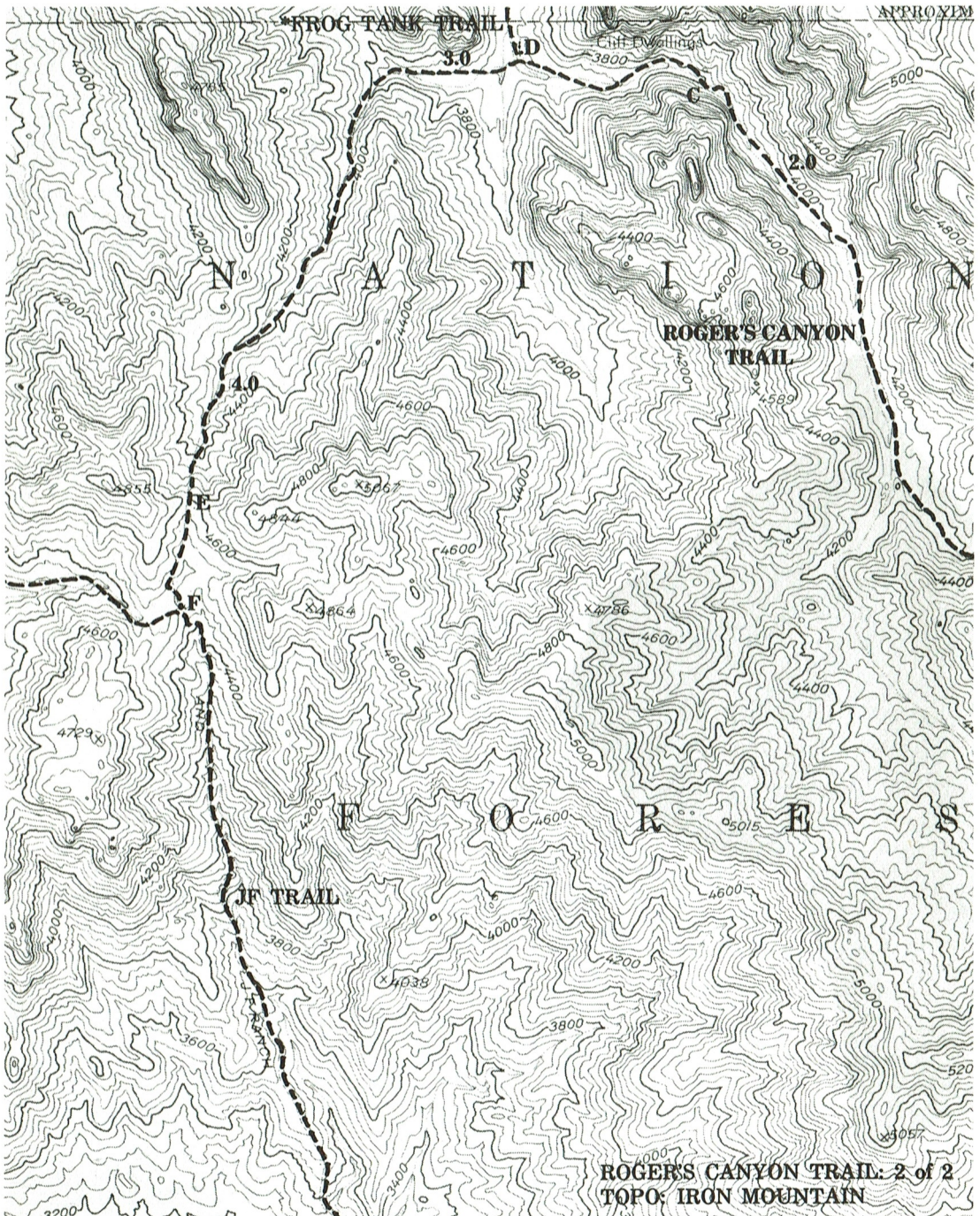
From the cliff dwellings, Roger's Canyon Trail continues, although many hikers turn here and head back to Roger's Trough Trailhead. The trail continues west from the ruins. While it may be vague where it first leaves the area, it soon improves. The trail crosses over to the left of the wash, then back to the right/north side before reaching a broad, grassy area. At the west end of this clearing, *Frog Tank Trail 112 starts [110-D; 2.8]. No trail is in evidence because the first part of Frog Tank Trail is simply a route which goes north up Roger's Canyon.

Roger's Canyon Trail continues west from the clearing after crossing Roger's Canyon wash

at 110-D. It makes several crossings of smaller drainages before following up the side of a drainage. It continues to move uphill along this route, going back and forth across the drainage. The area is pretty--lots of oaks and other trees. As the trail continues uphill in a southwesterly direction, the trees give way to shrubs. The trail climbs to a saddle [110-E; 4.4]. The last thousand feet to the saddle are very steep.

From the saddle at 110-E, the trail drops a short distance, then follows along a hillside before dropping to Tortilla Pass [110-F; 4.7] where it ends at a junction with JF Trail 106. From the junction, JF Trail goes ahead/south to JF Ranch and to the right/west to Tortilla Trailhead.





SECOND WATER TRAIL 236

Summary: This trail starts from Dutchman's Trail, goes through Garden Valley, then proceeds past the Second Water Spring area and ends at Boulder Canyon. Total length of the trail, one way, is 3.3 miles.

The start of the trail is reached from First Water Trailhead. From the new parking area at the trailhead, an old road continues east on the other side of the barrier at the wilderness boundary. This road drops down and heads east to a fork at 0.3 mile. From here, the right-hand fork continues about 100 yards to the old parking area. Dutchman's Trail 104 proceeds southeast from here for about 50 yards to a junction with the start of Second Water Trail [236-A; 0.0]. Second Water Trail heads left here while Dutchman's Trail continues ahead.

A few saguaros grow near the start of the trail among foothill paloverde, Engelmann's prickly pear, spineless hopsage, barberry, buckhorn cholla, hedgehog cacti, turpentine bush, triangle-leaf bur sage and jojoba (a shrub with a nut which contains an oil which is similar in many ways to that of the sperm whale). The loud whistles of curve-billed thrashers and the ratchety calls of cactus wrens can usually be heard in the area.

There are several trails of use which enter and leave the first section of the Second Water Trail. In general, the trail is well defined as it climbs gradually through a nice desert area to a little saddle [236-B; 0.4]. A side route enters from the left here, but the main trail swings to the right/east and goes diagonally downhill to a wash where it crosses to the other side [236-C; 0.7]. From the wash the trail goes north up a small canyon and comes out at a relatively level, open area [236-D; 1.3]. This wide area is known as Garden Valley (also Indian Gardens), and the trail is bordered by mesquite, Christmas cholla and some nice stands of jumping cholla. As it crosses Garden Valley, the trail passes the junction with Black Mesa Trail 241 [236-E; 1.5]. From this junction, which is just to the right/east of a small knob, Second Water Trail continues straight ahead/north while Black Mesa Trail goes right/southeast. Just beyond this junction, Weaver's Needle becomes visible

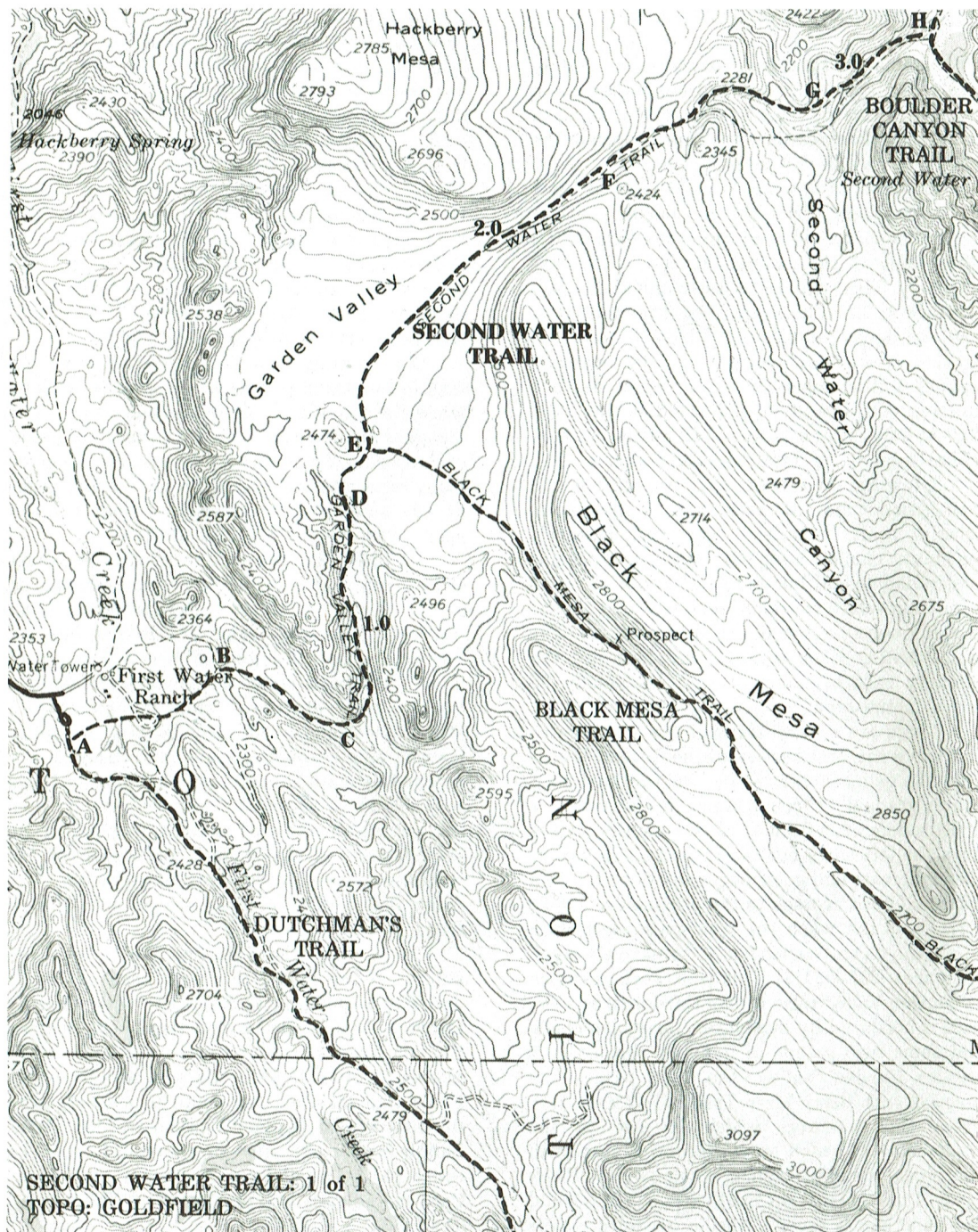
from Second Water Trail. At 1.9 miles there is a man-made cattle tank on the left side of the trail. The trail soon leaves Garden Valley and heads downhill. On both sides of the trail beyond the tank, the hillsides are a jumble of black basalt-angular, blackish rocks ranging in size from six inches to several feet across.

The narrow canyon which the trail passes through widens after a short distance, and the view greatly expands. Four Peaks is visible in the far distance. From 236-F [2.5] there is a nice view of Battleship Mountain to the right with Geronimo Head beyond it. The tip of Weaver's Needle is visible far off to the right.

As the trail continues, it comes to an old trail (a bulldozer swath) which soon veers left, while Second Water Trail takes a sharp right and goes down a canyon in the general direction of Battleship Mountain. Teddy bear chollas grow along here, and (depending on the season) there may be some pretty, water-filled tinajas in the rocky wash to the right of the trail.

At 236-G [2.9] the main trail bears left along the canyon, and Second Water drainage can be seen entering on the right. Second Water is an interesting drainage, and a side trip up the bottom can be rewarding. There is a series of algae-filled pools along the bottom for about a quarter mile upstream from the main trail. Water boatmen, caddisfly larvae, mosquito larvae, small aquatic snails and beetles are among the animal life that may be found in these pools. Each of the pools tends to have its own distinct assemblage of animals, depending on such factors as the amount and depth of the water, exposure to sunlight, season, etc. The frogs that plunk into the water are leopard frogs.

From near where Second Water drainage enters on the right, the main trail continues down to a junction [236-H; 3.3] with Boulder Canyon. This is also a junction with Boulder Canyon Trail 103 which is only a route as it passes through Boulder Canyon at this point. From this junction, the route to the left goes downstream in Boulder Canyon to Paint Mine Saddle and eventually to Canyon Lake. The route to the right goes upstream in Boulder Canyon and ends at a junction with Dutchman's Trail 104.



WHISKEY SPRING TRAIL 238

Summary: This relatively short trail starts at Miner's Summit, proceeds over and down to Whiskey Spring, then continues to La Barge Canyon where it ends at a junction with Red Tanks Trail. Total length of the trail, one way, is 2.1 miles.

This trail is usually reached from Peralta Trailhead. The start of the trail at Miner's Summit [238-A; 0.0] is at a junction with Dutchman's Trail at a point 4.3 miles from Peralta Trailhead. (For details of this location, see "Dutchman's Trail 104.") Note that from Peralta Trailhead it is necessary to hike Dutchman's Trail in the opposite direction from that described in this book. Of course, Miner's Summit can also be reached via the longer route from First Water Trailhead.

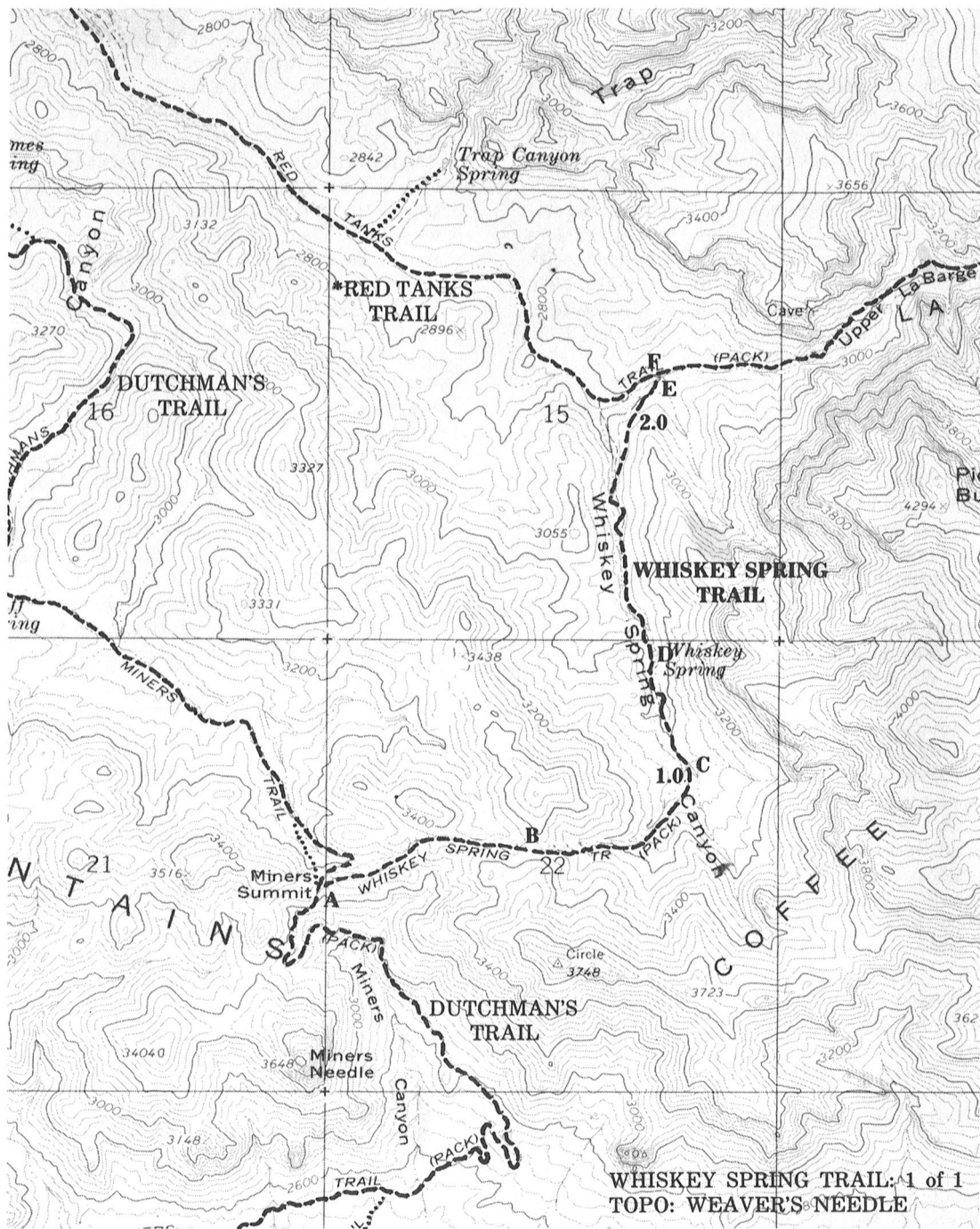
Trails leave Miner's Summit in four directions--Dutchman's Trail heads southwest toward Miner's Needle, then on down and over to Peralta Trailhead; Dutchman's Trail also heads northeast down a long switchback toward Crystal and Bluff Springs; a shortcut trail heads north, soon intersecting Dutchman's Trail; and Whiskey Spring Trail heads approximately east.

Whiskey Spring Trail is well-defined as it leaves Miner's Summit at 238-A and heads gradually up across the rather barren hillsides. A long switchback of Dutchman's Trail is just below on the left along the first part of the trail. Looking back from along this first stretch of trail, the tip of Weaver's Needle is visible, and Bluff Spring Mountain is to the right of it. In general, the trail climbs, passing through a nice area where there are lots of bare rocks covered with large patches of light green lichens. Resurrection plants are common among the rocks. These are so named because they are shriveled and brown during dry weather but turn healthy and green almost immediately after a good rain.

As with almost any trail in the Superstitions on late spring and summer afternoons, crickets can be heard chirping among the rocks and brush. If you aren't in too big a hurry to get from "Point A" to "Point B," you will find many small things to enjoy along every trail you take. There should be more to hiking than just

reaching a destination, and if you take your time and are alert, you can be sure of storing up many more memories than you would otherwise.

The trail tops out at a saddle at 238-B [0.5]. Coffee Flat Mountain is directly ahead/east from here, and a fair number of saguaros grow on the hillside to the left. From the saddle the trail heads downhill, keeping to the right of a drainage that becomes larger as it progresses downstream. There are several nice thickets of chaparral bordering the trail along the drainage. At 238-C [a little over 1.0] there is a drainage fork, and the trail crosses to the other side. From here the trail follows the Whiskey Spring Canyon drainage downstream toward La Barge Canyon. It crosses back and forth a number of times, passing Whiskey Spring at 238-D [1.4]. There may be some pools of water here, and some netleaf hackberries and cottonwoods provide shade in the warmer months. At the 1.8-mile point, the trail leaves Whiskey Spring Canyon, climbs a hillside for a short distance, then drops down to cross La Barge wash [238-E; a little under 2.1]. It ends at a junction with *Red Tanks Trail 107 at 238-F [2.1]. From here, Red Tanks Trail goes right/upstream to Upper La Barge Box and left/downstream to La Barge Spring.





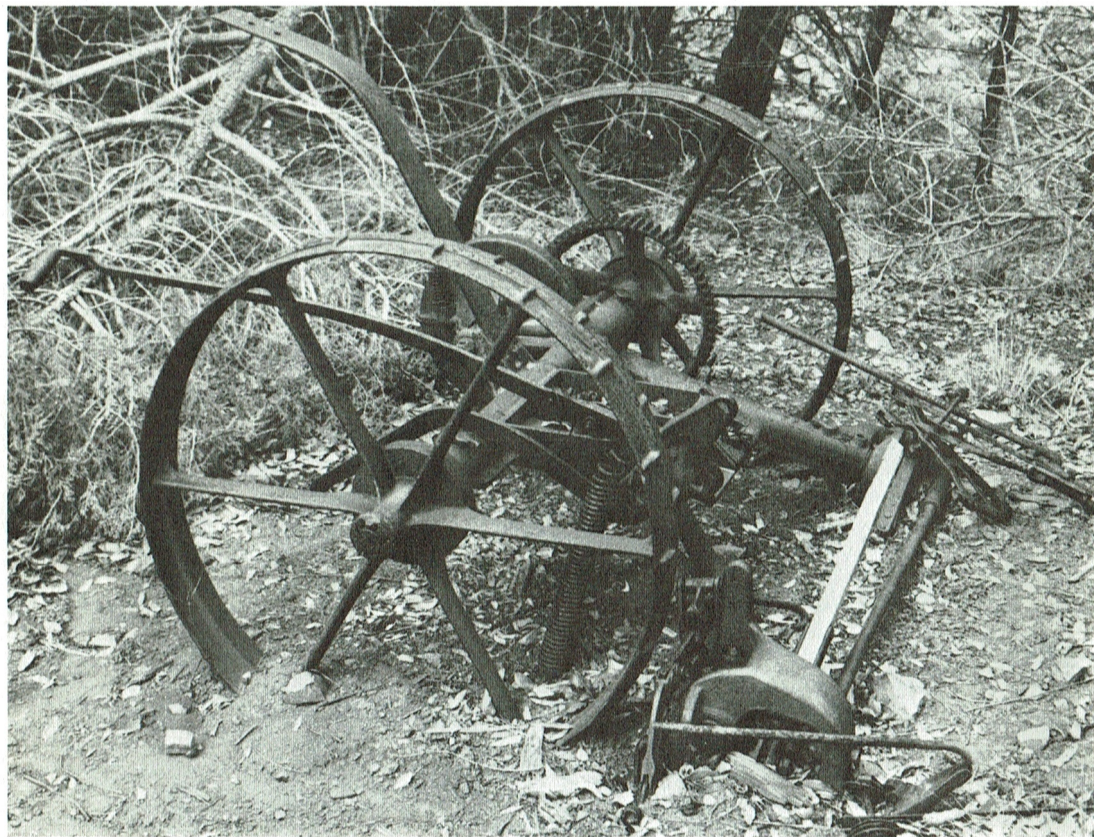
Indian Paint Mine



Dry creek bottom



Canyon tree frog



Old farm machinery

